University students' perceptions of graduate employer selection tests

Short title: Students' perceptions of job selection tests

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Declarations

Availability of data and material: The datasets can be found on the Open Science Framework website (Link).

Ethics approval: The study received ethical approval from a UK based university (ethics code): 2768

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Consent for publication: All authors have consented to publication

Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of the current study was to examine university students' knowledge, confidence, and experience of popular graduate employer selection tests.

Design: A cross-sectional self-report survey was administered to gather a sufficient number of quantitative responses from undergraduate students. A total of 241 students completed the survey with most of them being psychology students from Swansea University. Four key variables were examined: (1) students' experience, (2) confidence and (3) knowledge of selection tests and (4) their desire for more information about selection tests as part of their degree. An audit of selection tests used by the Times Top 100 graduate employers was also conducted.

Findings: Students tended to misjudge how often selection tests were used by employers, and generally lacked experience with these tests. Students' confidence in completing each test varied as a function of the selection test, however, prior experience with these tests positively predicted confidence. Additionally, over 70% of students reported a desire for further information about selection tests as part of their degree.

Originality: These findings are, to the authors knowledge, the first to explicitly assess second- and third-year undergraduate students' knowledge, experience and confidence with popular graduate employer selection tests and demonstrate that students would like more information about these tests on their programme.

Implications: These novel findings suggest that students could benefit from further information about selection tests as part of their degree programme, which would be of benefit to both students and universities.

Keywords: Graduate Employability, Higher Education, Careers, Selections tests,

Abstract word count: 239

Introduction

Graduate employment is a key concern for students, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and governments around the world. For many students gaining employment upon graduation is one of the key motivations for studying at University (Gedye *et al*., 2004; Kandiko and Mawer, 2013). For HEIs, the employment prospects of their students are crucial as it feeds into key metrics, including their positions in international (i.e., QS World University Rankings) and national league tables (e.g., in the UK: The Complete University Guide). For governments, it is important that universities provide employable graduates that can contribute to the workforce. The increasing recognition and importance of graduate employability is demonstrated by new government measures such as the "PROCEED" metric developed by the United Kingdom's Office for Students (OfS, 2021). This measure details the number of students projected to complete their degree and the number of those in professional level employment 15 months after graduating. There have been suggestions that this metric may be used to regulate quality standards for UK universities (Bradley et al., 2023; Dickinson, 2021). Similarly, Australia has also introduced performance-based funding for universities which depends in part on graduate outcomes (Wellings *et al*., 2019). Given the above it is clear why the employment prospects of graduates are of key importance to students, HEIs and governments around the world. However, there are many barriers graduates face when seeking employment.

One of the primary issues for graduates in gaining professional employment is the limited number of vacancies (Connor and Shaw, 2008). Although the number of students entering Higher Education (HE) has increased in recent decades (OECD, 2019), the number of graduate positions in organisations has not developed in tandem, resulting in a greater number of applications per vacancy (Department for Business Innovation and Skills, 2015; High Fliers, 2021). This increased competition for places poses a problem for organisations

as they must identify the most appropriate candidate(s), who they are likely to retain (see Heaton *et al.,* 2008), from a large pool of applicants in an efficient manner. To help aid the selection process organisations are now increasingly using a range of selection tests, beyond interviews and curriculum vitaes, that are objective, cost-effective and have good predictive validity (Branine, 2008; Ekuma, 2012). The CIPD's (2020) Resourcing and talent planning survey of over 650 HR professionals showed that a wide range of selection tests are now incorporated into the selection process by UK organisations. These include: verbal and numerical reasoning tests, personality and aptitude tests, assessment centres, behavioural simulations (e.g., role play activities) and gamification methods. The addition of these selection tests (e.g., psychometric tests), ensures that a large pool of applicants can be whittled down to a smaller pool of applicants using automated methods that can be delivered remotely, before deciding to consider candidates' suitability in greater depth. These additional tests, however, make the selection process an increasingly arduous experience for graduates seeking employment as they have a greater number of tests to complete and failure of any one of these rules them out of the process.

To ensure that graduates are prepared for the rigours of the selection process universities are increasingly placing focus on *employability* (Brown, 2014; Fallows and Stevens; 2000; Miller *et al*., 2013; Wickramasinghe and Perera, 2010). That is, the attributes and achievements that enhances graduates' employment prospects (Yorke, 2006). The approach to employability of a university can be broadly categorised into one of the three approaches: bolt-on, embedded or parallel (Cranmer, 2006; also see: Bennett *et al*., 2017; Jackson and Bridgstock, 2021). A bolt-on approach is where a university's employability coverage is provided as part of the core degree programme but is non-mandatory (e.g., an optional third-year module). An embedded approach is where the employability provision of a university is an integral part of the student experience which is reflected in the teaching and

learning objectives of a degree programme (i.e., a compulsory first year employability module may form part of the degree programme). A parallel approach is where a university provides employability initiatives alongside the delivering of the core degree programme (i.e., career services may provide extra-curricular employability related awards). Bradley *et al*. (2019) conducted an audit of the frequency of these different approaches within psychology departments in UK universities (also see: Bennett *et al*., 2017). Their findings revealed that the parallel approach is the most popular with 56% of UK universities employing this method within their psychology departments. The efficacy of this approach, however, is questionable as the non-mandatory nature of the parallel approach runs the risk of failing to ensure students engage with employability initiatives.

To explore the level of engagement with career services in a UK institution that adopted a parallel approach, Bradley *et al*. (2019) surveyed 258 undergraduate psychology students about their attendance at careers events. On average students attended less than half the careers events available to them. These results are consistent with McKeown and Lindorff (2011) and Fouad *et al.* (2006) who also found that many students were not aware of the career services available at their university or had not used them (also see: Andrews and Russell, 2012; Donald *et al*., 2018). In Bradley *et al.* (2019) the events that related to navigating the application and selection process such as writing CVs and completing psychometric tests had particularly poorly attendance (respectively 8% and 18%). One possible explanation for the attendance levels at these events is that students do not need support as they are proficient with these tests. However, Bradley *et al*. (2020) found that < 50% of participants passed two commonly used psychometric tests, with 46.43% of final year psychology students passing verbal reasoning tests and only 16.47% passing numerical reasoning tests. Notably, the best predictor of passing the numerical reasoning test, was prior experience in completing a numerical reasoning test. The results of this study would seem to

dismiss the notion that students do not attend career events relating to selection tests as they know how to complete these tests. It might be the case, however, that students do not know how frequently different selection tests are employed by graduate recruiters and have insufficient experience in completing these tests, hence accounting for the low pass rates observed by Bradley *et al*. (2020).

Students' awareness and knowledge about selection tests and the recruitment process is recognised as an essential aspect of employability in the influential CareerEDGE model of employability (Darce Pool and Sewell, 2007). In the model "Career Development Learning" which involves "job getting activities" such as preparing for job selection processes (e.g., interviews, CVs and psychometric tests) forms one of the five key components of employability (the others four being experience, degree subject knowledge, generic skills and emotional intelligence). However, this aspect of employability has not always been well represented in HEIs (Watts, 2006). To the authors knowledge, there are also no studies that have directly assessed student awareness, confidence, experience and desire for further information about selection tests with undergraduate students in the final years of their degree programmes. Whilst there are validated scales of students' perceived employability (see Neroorkar, 2022), these do not measure in detail students' readiness for many of the selection tasks they will have to complete to attain a graduate level role (García-Aracil, 2021; Rothwell *et al*., 2008).

The current study

Considering the above, the current study sought to explore: 1) students' knowledge of the number of graduate recruiters that employ different selection tests; 2) students' experience of completing these tests; 3) students' confidence in completing these tests; and 4) whether students would like further information about selection tests as part of their degree programme. To explore these questions a survey was administered to undergraduate students

in their second or third year of their degree programmes. To examine the accuracy of students' predictions regarding the popularity of different selection tests, students' predictions were compared to the percentage of graduate employers who administered different selection tests based on an Audit of the Times Top 100 Graduate Employers (see Bradley *et al*. 2020). Given the lack of previous research the research was exploratory in nature.

Method

Participants

Two hundred and forty-one undergraduate students took part in the study. Participants ranged from 19 to 39 years of age (M = 21.04; SD = 2.82). Most of the sample identified as female (n = 185, 76.76%), with 55 (22.82%) participants identifying as male and one participant identifying as non-binary (.41%). The sample consisted of 189 third-year students (78.42%) and 52 second-year students (21.58%). Most students were studying at one UK university (67.22%), with the remainder studying at other United Kingdom based universities (32.78%). A total of 137 (56.85%) participants were studying psychology, or joint honours psychology degree programmes with the rest study a diverse range of programmes. One participant did not provide information about their degree programme. Over half of the sample held a part-time job during their degree (n = 151; 62.66%), whilst 27.39% (n = 66) of the sample had volunteered during their degree and 17.43% (n = 42) of the sample had completed an internship or some form of work placement. Participants received an email advertising the study. The study was also advertised through the researchers' social media networks. Participants either received subject pool credits for their participation or took part voluntarily. Ethical approval for the study was received from a UK University's Department of Psychology Ethics Committee.

Design

A cross-sectional survey design was employed as this is an effective technique for gathering quantitative information from a population about specific topics (Preston, 2009). There were four key independent variables, these were survey questions relating to students' (1) knowledge, (2) confidence and (3), experience of completing selection tests and (4) their desire for more information about selection tests as part of their degree. The first dependent variable was students' predictions of the percentage of graduate employers that administered specific job selection methods (e.g., interviews, numerical reasoning tests). The mean value of students' prediction for each selection test was compared to the percentage of graduate employers who administered these selection tests based on an audit of the Times Top 100 Graduate employers 2018-19 (see Bradley *et al*., 2020). The second dependent variable was students' confidence ratings for different job selection methods [1 = Not confident at all; 2 = Not very confident; 3 = Quite confident; 4 = Very confident] and the third dependent variable was students' experience of completing job selection methods. The fourth dependent variable was whether students would like further information about selection methods as part of the degree programme (Yes/No). Students' demographic details (e.g., gender, year of study), previous work experience and engagement with employability events also served as predictors of students' experience of job selection methods. To examine predictors of students' confidence ratings, the same predictors were used, with previous experience of completing selection tests serving as an additional predictor. The same predictor variables were also examined, in addition to confidence ratings, to determine if these factors predicted whether students would like further information about selection methods as part of their degree programme.

Apparatus and Materials

An online survey was administered using Qualtrics. A version of the survey has been used and validated in research conducted by Bradley et al. (2022). Participants were first required to provide socio-demographic details including their age, gender, university, year of study, degree programme, work experience completed during their degree (i.e., Part-time Job; Internship/Work Placement/Volunteer Work) and their engagement with career events at their university (e.g., Adviser drop-in sessions; Career Fairs). Participants were then presented with the following information: "*Employers often use selection methods to identify suitable candidates for the job. What percentage (%) of graduate employers do you think use the following selection methods? Please provide a number ranging from 0 [none of them] – 100 [all of them] for each of the options below*". The following selection methods were then presented: *Application Form, Assessment Centres, Curricula Vitae, Interview, Logical Reasoning Tests, Numerical Reasoning Tests, Personality Profiling, Preliminary Interviews (i.e., video/telephone interviews), Presentations, Roleplay/group Exercises, Situational Judgement Test* and *Verbal Reasoning Tests*. Two fictitious selection tests (i.e., "*Person Centred Grounding" and* "*Skills Assimilation Tests")* were also provided to assess whether students were able to identify non-existent selection tests.

On a subsequent screen, participants were then asked: "How confident would you feel completing each of these methods?". They were required to provide a rating on a four-point Likert-Scale (1 = "Not Confident at all", 2 = "Not very confident"; 3 = "Quite confident"; 4 = "Very confident") for each of the selection tests noted above. Participants were then also asked to "Please select the following job selection methods you have experience of completing?" based on the same list of selection methods. Finally, participants were asked whether they "would like further information about these selection methods on their course? [Yes/No]".

Procedure

Participants were asked to take part in the study via an email or social media advert containing a link to the Qualtrics survey, or they signed up to take part using the Departmental Participant Pool. If participants took part, they were then required to read through an information sheet and complete a consent form. Following this, participants provided their socio-demographic details before providing ratings regarding the number of graduate recruiters likely to employ various selection tests, their confidence and experience with these methods, and whether they would like further information about these methods on their course. Finally, they were provided with a debrief sheet.

Results

All analyses were conducted in JASP (version 0.14.0.0). The datasets can be found on the Open Science Framework website (Peer Review Link).

Audit of Graduate Employers Selection Tests

An audit of the selection tests used by 100 UK graduate employers provided a measure of the frequency of different selection techniques. The audit was conducted on the Times Top 100 Graduate employers that featured in the 2018-2019 guide and has previously been described and partially reported in Bradley *et al*. (2020), however, additional selection tests have been coded for this audit. The employers that feature in the Times Top 100 Graduate employers guide are those that featured most in a sample of students' response to an open-ended question about which employers they think offers the best opportunities for gradates (The Times, 2019). Given that the employers that feature in the guide are those which final year students themselves have selected and consider good employers to apply to, this is a good resource to audit.

The audit was conducted by accessing the recruitment website for each of the employers that featured in the Times Top 100 Graduate Employers Guide. The audit coded

each employer for the following selection tests: Application Forms, Interviews (preliminary and final), Logical Reasoning Tests, Numerical Reasoning Tests, Personality Profiling, Situational Judgement Test and Verbal Reasoning Tests. Insufficient information was available about additional selection tests, such as Assessment Centres, Curricula Vitaes, Presentations and Roleplay/group exercises, to determine with any reliability how frequently these tests were used. The results of the audit can be seen in Table 1. As can be seen application forms and interview were the methods used most, whilst psychometric tests (e.g., logical and verbal reasoning tests) were used to a lesser degree. However, it is important to note that the actual number of employers incorporating psychometric tests is likely to be higher as not all employers explicitly detail which tests will be used prior to a successful application.

Students' perceptions of the likelihood of completing job selection methods

Table 1 contains the mean and standard deviation of students' predictions of the percentage of graduate employers that administered job selection tests. To assess the accuracy of students' perceptions, the mean value for each selection test was compared to the percentage of graduate employers who administered these tests based on an audit of the Times Top 100 Graduate employers. As can be seen in Table 1, participants appeared to underestimate the likelihood of graduate employers using some selection tests (e.g., interviews and numerical reasoning tests), whilst overestimating the likelihood of other selection tests (e.g., logical and verbal reasoning tests and the fictitious selection tests). For some selection tests their frequency of use could not be obtained from the audit. These will be discussed further in the discussion.

One-sample t-tests were performed comparing the mean value of students' predictions to the percentage of graduate employers who administered these tests based on the audit of the Times Top 100 Graduate employers. To protect against a Type 1 error, the Benjamini-

Hochberg Procedure was performed (Benjamini and Hochberg, 1995). These tests revealed that students underestimated the use of application forms, final interviews and numerical reasoning tests, whilst overestimating the use of logical reasoning tests, personality profiling, preliminary interviews, situational judgement tests, verbal reasoning tests and the fictitious selection tests.

INSERT TABLE 1 HERE

Students' experience with job selection methods

Table 2 displays the percentage of students with experience of completing each job selection task and the number of graduate employers who administer these tests based on the audit of the Times Top 100 Graduate employers. As can be seen participants' experience varied for each of the selection tasks. The selection tasks students had most experience completing were job application forms (M = 95.44; SD = 20.91) and final interviews (M = 89.63; SD = 30.56). Those tests they reported having least experience with were the fictitious selection methods (Person Centred Grounding: M = 7.05; SD = 25.66; Skills Assimilation Tests: M = 19.92; SD = 40.02), as would be expected, and assessment centres (M = 17.84; SD = 38.37). One-sample t-tests were again performed comparing the % of students with experience of completing each selection task, to the number of graduate employers who administered these tests based on the audit of the Times Top 100 Graduate employers. The Benjamini-Hochberg correction procedure was again performed. As can been seen in Table 2, there were significant discrepancies between participants experience in completing these tests and the number of employers who administered these tests based on the audit. That is, for all

(real) selection methods, except for logical reasoning tests and personality profiling, students appeared to be underexperienced in completing these tests.

A multiple regression was also performed to identify factors that predicted experience with job selection methods. The outcome variable was the sum score of real selection methods that students had experience with. The predictor variables included: gender, year of study, work experience during university (i.e., whether students had experience of part-time time work, an internship or voluntary work) and the number of careers and employability events attended whilst at university. One participant identified as non-binary and was not dummy coded in this regression model (and subsequent regression models). The regression model was significant F (4, 235) = 5.82, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .09$, with work experience ($B = 1.14$, $p < .01$) and the number of careers events attended ($B = .42$, $p < .05$), significantly predicting the number of selection tests students had experience with. The model revealed that those students with work experience and those who had attended a greater number of careers events had experience with a greater range of selection tests. All other predictors were non-significant (smallest $p = .11$).[1]

INSERT TABLE 2 HERE

Students' confidence in completing job selection methods

Figure 1 displays participants mean confidence ratings for each of the selection tasks. As can be seen participants' confidence ratings varied from "Not very confident" to "Quite

[1] Further analyses were also conducted to examine the impact of different types of previous work experience on students' experience and confidence with job selection methods. This is reported in the supplementary analyses. In sum, more types of work experience predicted more experience and confidence with job selection tests. Specifically, part-time work and internships/work placements predicted more experience and confidence with selection methods. However, volunteering did not.

confident". The selection tasks students were most confident with were Application Forms and Curricula Vitae, whilst those tests they were least confident with were Presentations, Assessment Centres and Numerical reasoning tests. Regarding participants' confidence ratings for the fictitious selection methods, "Person-centred grounding" was rated the lowest, whilst "Skills Assimilation Test" was rated higher than several real selection tests.

A multiple regression was performed to identify factors that predicted confidence with the job selection tasks. The outcome variable was the mean confidence rating of all real selection methods. The predictor variables included: gender, year of study, work experience during university (i.e., whether students had experience of part-time time work, an internship or voluntary work), the number of careers events attended whilst at university and the number of selection tasks students had experience with. The regression model was significant F (5, 234) = 11.197, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .19$, with gender ($B = .14$, $p < .05$) and the number of selection tests students had experience with ($B = .06$, $p < .001$), significantly predicting students' confidence with selection tests. The model revealed that males were more confident than females and those who had experience with a greater number of selection tests had a higher confidence score. All other predictors were non-significant (smallest $p = .07$).

INSERT FIGURE 1 HERE

Students desire for further information about selection methods

Finally, an important point the survey sought to establish was whether students would like further information about these job selection methods on their course. A count of participants' binary responses revealed that most students desired further information about selection methods on their course with 180 participants (74.68%) responding "Yes" and only

61 (25.31%) participants responding “No”. A binary logistic regression was also performed with the outcome variable being whether students wanted further information about selection methods on their course (Yes/No) and predictor variables of gender, year of study, work experience (i.e., whether students had experience of part-time time work, an internship or voluntary work), experience of selection methods and confidence in completing selection methods. The overall model was non-significant, χ^2 (234) = 6.93, p = .226, with none of the predictors significantly predicting whether students’ desire further information about selection tests (smallest p = .145).

Discussion and Conclusions

The current study explored students’ knowledge, experience, and confidence of popular employment selection tests, as well as whether students wanted more information on selection tasks within their degree programme. The current study makes four valuable contributions to the literature. First, students tended to underestimate the prevalence of widely used selection tasks whilst overestimating others. This suggest that students are unclear about the types of selection methods that they may be likely to encounter when applying for graduate jobs. Second, the study demonstrated that many students lack experience with key selection tasks (i.e., application forms, situational judgement tests etc.). For all selection methods, except for personality profiling and logical reasoning tests, most students were underexperienced. Third, on average students felt ‘not confident’ or ‘quite confident’ across many commonly used selection tasks with one of the key predictors of higher confidence being subsequent practice. A key factor which predicted students’ confidence ratings was prior experience with selection tests. Finally, an overwhelming majority of students wished to learn more about selection tasks on their degree programme.

These findings hold important implications for students, academics, careers advisors and universities. Collectively these results suggest that students could benefit from further

coverage of these selection tests during their degree. Although many universities cover selection methods in sessions run by career services, students do not always engage in these sessions, particularly when these sessions are non-mandatory (e.g., Andrews & Russell, 2012; Bradley *et al*., 2019; Donald *et al*., 2018; Fouad *et al*., 2006; McKeown and Lindorff, 2011). One way of ensuring students receive this information is by embedding employability within a degree programme and ensuring it is assessed, otherwise previous research suggests that engagement will be poor (Jackson and Edgar, 2019). An embedded approach to employability with coverage of different types of selection methods has shown to be effective at increasing students' knowledge and confidence of selection tests when practical skills about the selection process has been taught to them (Bradley *et al*., 2022; Taylor and Hooley, 2014). Previous research has also identified that prior experience with these tests also increases the likelihood that students will pass them (i.e., a practice effect; Calamia *et al*., 2012; Hausknecht *et al*., 2007). Embedding coverage of these tests in a degree programme, where students get an opportunity to practise them, would also appear to be something students desire and would be of key benefit to them as it will ensure that they are more likely to pass these tests. Additionally, embedding information about these selection tests would be one way of ensuring that students receive information about important "job getting activities" referred to in the CareerEDGE model and thus enhance students' graduate prospects. It would also help ensure that students are better prepared to meet the expectations of employers (see Rosenberg *et al*., 2012; Wickramasinghe and Perera, 2010) Jackson *et al.* (2022) recently noted that student engagement with employment-related activities is critical for effective transition to the workplace.

Enhancing students' careers prospects will be particularly important for graduatesgiven the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the job market (The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD)], 2021). Prior to the pandemic

research suggested that in the UK 60% of graduates secured a graduate role before leaving university, however, during first year of the pandemic only 18% of graduates had secured a graduate role (Milkround, 2020). The number of graduate applications has also increased sharply as a result of pandemic, with the top employers reporting 41% more applications compared to pre-pandemic levels (High Fliers, 2021). The impact of the pandemic for graduates has also been predicted to last for up to a decade (Johnson, 2020), thus it is likely that increased competition for places will remain a challenge for the foreseeable future. This impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the job market, combined with the increased pressures on HEIs to ensure graduates attain graduate level employment, make it particularly important that HEIs ensure graduates are well prepared for selection tests. If graduates are failing these tests and not attaining graduate employment as they are unaware of them, this has the potential to reflect poorly on HEIs through key metrics including league tables positions. As such, ensuring that steps are taken to facilitate students in navigating the selection process would appear to be of key importance to HEIs.

There are limitations to the current study. For instance, not all students seek graduate level jobs with many choosing other options (e.g., further study or non-graduate employment) and the usage of certain selection tests also differs by country and career path (Hodgkinson and Payne, 1998). The Times Top 100 Graduate Employers guide may also provide an overestimate of the use of selection tests as it contains large, established employers that are more likely to have greater need (and resources) to administer a range of selection tests. It was also difficult to obtain estimates of the usage of certain selection tests as insufficient information was provided (e.g., assessment centres, curricula vitae). However, given the increased competition for graduate vacancies (High Fliers, 2020) and the increasing usage of these tests across all organisations (e.g., Branine 2008), knowledge and experience of these tests will be of benefit to students regardless of whether they apply for graduate or non-

graduate jobs. Additionally, it is also possible that students simply prepare themselves for selection tests when applying for a role after they have graduated. However, students may not have easy access to the resources and support that universities provide to help them with the process after graduating and learning about these tests at such a late stage means that graduates may be insufficiently prepared. The self-report nature of the data is also an important limitation as participants may provide responses they consider to be desirable (Larson, 2019). This is illustrated by the fact that some participants reported experiencing the fictitious selection methods included in the survey. Furthermore, most participants were recruited from a single university and studied psychology, thus limiting the generalisability of the findings.

Future studies would benefit from a larger sample with students from a broader range of disciplines. Future research would also benefit from exploring students' perceptions of newer selections tests such as gamification methods (e.g., Lyons et al., 2023) and obtaining objective outcome measures such as students' completion of embedded careers courses and their future success in obtaining graduate work. If embedded careers courses are indeed effective in helping students obtain graduate work (e.g., O'Regan et al., 2022), it is also important that subsequent research be undertaken to identify the aspects of these courses that have the most impact on students' graduate outcomes (e.g., workshops, networking events) and to identify the students who benefit most from embedded career courses. This would help ensure that embedded careers courses can be developed to have the most impact on students at HEIs.

In summary, the current study makes an important contribution by revealing that students have an inaccurate view of the popularity of selection tests and lack experience with these tests. Students' confidence with these tests varied as a function of tests, however, prior experience with these resulted in higher confidence. These results have important

implications as they suggest that students would benefit from further coverage of these tests during their degree programme which appears to be something students themselves desire. One way to do this would be for universities to adopt an embedded approach to employability where coverage of selection tests is provided as part of degree programmes.

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Table 1 Source: Authors' own work

Students' predictions of the number of graduate employers who use selection tests and the numbers obtained from an audit of the Times Top 100 Graduate Employers

Selection Tasks	Students' Predictions	Audit	t value	p value	Cohen's d
	M (SD)	N			
Application Forms	84.46 (18.70)	100	-12.90	<.001***	-0.83
Assessment Centres	51.00 (23.38)	-	-	-	-
CV	70.73 (29.26)	-	-	-	-
Final Interview	87.33 (14.39)	100	-13.66	<.001***	-0.88
Logical Tests	51.31 (20.41)	28	17.74	<.001***	1.14
Numerical Reasoning Test	47.80 (20.64)	53	-3.91	<.001***	-0.25
Person Centred Grounding [a]	38.54 (22.81)	0	26.23	<.001***	1.69
Personality profiling	51.74 (25.26)	22	18.28	<.001***	1.17
Preliminary interviews	68.82 (20.73)	64	3.61	<.001***	0.23
Presentations	39.51 (22.30)	-	-	-	-
Role plays/Group Tasks	42.64 (22.86)	-	-	-	-
Situational Judgement Test	53.95 (24.42)	50	2.51	0.013*	0.16
Skills assimilation tests [a]	49.73 (23.30)	0	33.32	<.001***	2.14
Verbal Reasoning Test	50.01 (23.15)	39	7.38	<.001***	0.48

Note. [a] *= Fictitious selection tasks. These tasks were provided to assess whether students could identify false selection tasks. "-" denotes instances where information could not be obtained from the audit. * denotes statistical significance = < .05; *** denotes statistical significance = <.001*

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Table 2 Source: Authors' own work

% of students' with experience of job selection tests

Selection Tasks	Students' experience (%)	Audit	t value	p value	Cohen's d
	M (SD)	N			
Application Forms	95.44 (20.91)	100	-3.38	<.001***	-0.22
Assessment Centres	17.84 (38.37)	-	-	-	-
CV	68.05 (46.73)	-	-	-	-
Final Interview	89.63 (30.56)	100	-5.27	<.001***	-0.34
Logical Tests	38.17 (48.68)	28	3.24	<.01**	0.21
Numerical Reasoning Test	32.37 (46.88)	53	-6.83	<.001***	-0.44
Person Centred Grounding [a]	7.05 (25.66)	0	4.27	<.001***	0.28
Personality profiling	25.73 (43.80)	22	1.32	.188	0.09
Preliminary interviews	53.53 (49.98)	64	-3.25	<.01**	-0.21
Presentations	24.48 (43.09)	-	-	-	-
Role plays/Group Tasks	49.38 (50.10)	-	-	-	-
Situational Judgement Test	39.00 (48.88)	50	-3.49	<.001***	-0.23
Skills assimilation tests [a]	19.92 (40.02)	0	7.73	<.001***	0.49
Verbal Reasoning Test	23.65 (42.58)	39	-5.57	<.001***	-0.36

Note. [a] *= Fictitious selection tasks. These tasks were provided to assess whether students could identify false selection tasks. "-" denotes instances where information could not be obtained from the audit.*
** denotes statistical significance = < .05; ** denotes statistical significance < .01 *** denotes statistical significance = <.001*

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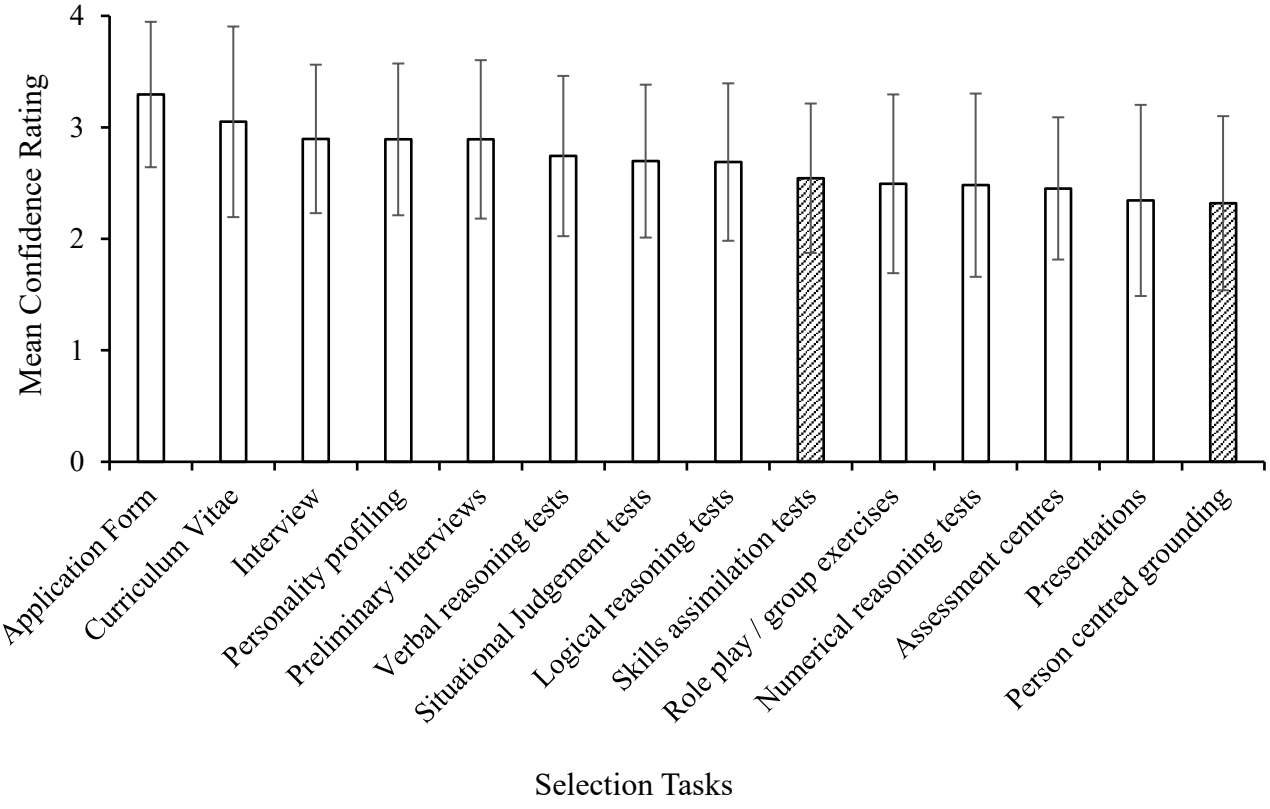
Figure 1 Source: Authors' own work

Students' confidence in completing job selection tests



Note. Mean confidence ratings for each of the selection tasks. Errors bars represent the standard deviation. Patterned bars represent the fictitious selection tests.

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