CPSQ for teachers

Gain insights that will help your teachers to thrive
What is CPSQ?

The Cambridge Personal Styles Questionnaire® (CPSQ) is an online, psychometric assessment that provides insight into a teacher’s values, attitudes and behaviours – their personal styles.

Success in teaching requires more than academic ability. Factors such as resilience, conscientiousness and motivation all influence career success and wellbeing for an individual, and impact on teacher retention rates for an organisation.

CPSQ supports personal and professional development, as part of initial teacher training or for in-service teachers.

CPSQ research

CPSQ has been developed and trialled by experts in Cambridge in collaboration with educational organisations. By combining their experiences with prevailing research, we created an evidence-based way of exploring the values, attitudes and behaviours needed for teaching careers.

- Easy to administer
- Available on demand
- Instant reporting
- Take anywhere
- Complete in 20–40 minutes
- Access on PC, tablet and mobile
- Minimum English level: CEFR* B2

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*The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is an international standard for describing language ability. It does this on a six-point scale, from A1 for beginners, up to C2 for those who have mastered a language. This makes it easy for anyone involved in language teaching and testing, such as teachers or learners, to see the level of different qualifications. It also means that employers and educational institutions can easily compare our qualifications to other exams in their country.
Why use CPSQ for teachers?

**Gain insight to guide tutoring and mentoring**
By understanding teachers’ specific development requirements, you can make the most efficient use of tutoring and mentoring time, and match teachers with the most suitable mentors.

**Tackle teacher retention**
Take early action by identifying teachers whose personal styles may mean they are at greater risk of leaving the profession, and implement timely support.

**Encourage and guide reflective practice**
Help your teachers to understand and reflect on their own strengths and areas for improvement, and to put their own personal action plans into place.

**Identify teachers in need of extra support**
Gain insight into personal styles that could negatively affect teacher wellbeing, particularly following recent disruptions to teaching.

**Approach conversations with a shared language**
Reports provide a starting point to open up development conversations using a shared and non-judgemental language.

**Understand your applicants better**
Used as part of selection, CPSQ can provide insight into your applicants, allowing you to focus valuable interview time into areas that matter.

“...We want to gather as much information as possible about our trainees before they start training to allow us to implement more targeted and personalised strategies in the initial stages of teacher training. We have chosen CPSQ as a tool to help us do that. We hope this will support trainees to have the strongest start to their training year and lead to fewer trainees withdrawing from teacher training."

Kirsten Webber | ITT Partnership Manager and NQT Adviser, Stockton SCITT
CPSQ’s professional competency framework

To understand how someone’s personal styles of behaving might influence their participation in a teaching career, their questionnaire responses are interpreted against seven professional competencies:

- **Caring and compassion**: Puts others first and is keen to help. Responds with sensitivity to feelings and is kind. Acts with patience and respect even with challenging individuals.

- **Coping with demands**: Resilient to challenge, change and setbacks. Calm and capable when faced with stressful situations and work demands.

- **Person-centred communication**: Confidently engages with others. Regularly uses empathetic and socially supportive forms of communication.

- **Working well with others**: Works collaboratively by sharing goals, ideas and resources. Consults others and is willing to compromise. Considerate and supportive. Tolerant when others are provoking.

- **Professional practice**: Follows rules and guidelines. Takes responsibility and is dependable. Alert to risk and safety issues.


- **Engagement with learning**: Keen to understand theory behind practice. Regularly uses curious, critical, flexible and creative thinking styles that facilitate learning, ideas generation and problem-solving.
The CPSQ report

For each competency, a score is provided on a one to five scale. The higher a score, the more likely it is that current behaviours are effective and support progress.

Within each competency, a person may have stronger and weaker areas, which are signposted in three possible feedback categories: Positive, Neutral and Improvement points.

Below is an example of the report for the Self-management competency:

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Self-management

Positive Points
- Likes to pursue high standards of work.
- Typically has a clear sense of direction and sets own challenging personal goals.

Neutral Points
- Tends to start work straight away, but may delay if a task is routine or boring.
- Generally focuses on work and finishes things once started.

Points to improve
- Does not take naturally to working in a structured and organised way.
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Using CPSQ results

We provide organisations with resources that give further support and advice on how to use the results. This includes guidance on using CPSQ results as part of coaching conversations.
CPSQ’s online platform

The questionnaire can be taken online and at any location (e.g. at home or at your organisation). It is quick and easy to set up and share with individuals participating in CPSQ.

Organise your own assessments

- access the CPSQ platform on computer, tablet or mobile at any time
- invite, manage and monitor the progress of individuals with ease
- customise the individual experience with editable email templates

Use the reports

- make quick decisions with instant access to completed reports
- control who is able to view the reports
- access individual and group reports for analysis
- share and discuss the results with individuals using on-screen reports

Read the full case study: admissionstesting.org/case-study-suffolk-and-norfolk-scitt
Read about the five-year research programme: admissionstesting.org/the-role-of-personality-on-teacher-retention
Improving trainee teacher retention by analysing personal styles

In the UK, trainee teachers undertake a challenging postgraduate programme of academic study and structured school-based training, and although most go on to become successful teachers, not all complete the course. Trainee retention has therefore become a serious issue for the teaching profession, leading to a greater emphasis on early identification of less robust trainees in order to ensure the right support is provided at the right time.

This strategy is being explored in a five-year research programme commissioned by leading teacher training provider Suffolk and Norfolk School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) and delivered by Cambridge Assessment Admissions Testing, the Relationships Foundation and The Open University.

The Suffolk and Norfolk SCITT is currently using CPSQ for teachers as part of its trainee induction process. This allows trainers to identify those behavioural competencies that can impact on performance and wellbeing. It can be used to target and tailor training and support more accurately.

Interim findings have proved very interesting. For example, when CPSQ was used to compare trainee profiles, those who withdrew from the course recorded more low scores across the behavioural competency areas, especially 'coping with demands'.

Anna Richards, Executive Leader at the Suffolk and Norfolk SCITT, is impressed with the trial so far: 'CPSQ has helped us gain a greater insight into our trainees and their styles of behaviour and has helped inform how we support them,' she comments. 'Not only does CPSQ help trainees reflect on their own behaviour styles and needs, it also allows us to make early, targeted interventions. For example, if a trainee’s answers suggest they may have an issue with 'coping with demands' we have made sure that they work with a particularly experienced and supportive personal tutor and mentor.'

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Anna Richards | Executive Leader at the Suffolk and Norfolk SCITT
We are part of the University of Cambridge and have been working with UK and worldwide educational institutions, governments and employers for more than 15 years.

Our admissions and personal development assessments are a global mark of excellence that set the quality standard.