

The ABLE<sup>®</sup> (Aptitude for Business Learning) Series of exercises combines the richness of a work simulation with the objectivity of a psychometric instrument. Ground-breaking contextualised exercises that teach, then test to give a dynamic measurement of ability to learn.

## Performance Programming

Target group	Software analysts; application programmers; graduate-level IT trainees
Skills measured	Applicants need to manage a repertoire of software resources, working within restrictions defined by the logical properties of objects and ensuring that sequences of events set in train by user cannot result in the system crashing
Time required	40 minutes, timed, in a supervised setting
Qualification required	BPS Level A

### What is Performance Programming?

The Performance Programming test teaches the candidate a set of procedures for identifying errors in a sequence of interdependent events. The test asks candidates to manage a repertoire of different available system resources. All of the resources have logical limitations and the candidate must manipulate them to meet various requirements, without exceeding the constraints of the system.

#### How will candidates be assessed?

The test is set within the context of a theatre project where the candidate is asked to diagnose problems in lighting a production to be staged in a small hall with limited resources and equipment. An *information booklet* provides the candidate with details about the different types of lights available, schedule issues and a presentation of the personnel and their different responsibilities. From this information the candidate is expected to build up a pattern of knowledge that he or she must then apply to a problem with the lighting plot; either a schedule problem or an equipment problem.

The task is completed by indicating, in a *question and answer booklet*, whether it is a schedule problem or equipment problem and what parts of the personnel it might concern. Each question is extracted from a lighting plot which shows how and when each light should be used. Information on the status of lights at the beginning of each scene and during the change-over breaks between scenes is given in a plot. The order in which lights are presented in the plot is the order in which they are handled. The information provided in the *information booklet* is presented in a written format. There are a total of 30 questions in the *question and answer booklet* and six separate information sheets within the *information booklet*. Candidates are assessed on their skill in managing and



manipulating the different system resources, to meet various requirements, without exceeding the constraints of the system.

No prior knowledge of projects within theatre is required and candidates with knowledge of these sectors will not have an unfair advantage; the test assesses learning, not prior knowledge. The test is independent of any programming language, but requires candidates to use the reasoning skills employed in modern programming. A preparation leaflet is available which briefs candidates on what to expect.

## What skills will be assessed?

- Logical reasoning
- Numerical reasoning
- Verbal comprehension
- Ability to manage a repertoire of system resources
- Ability to work within the constraints defined by the logical properties of a system
- Ability to learn a new programming language quickly
- Ability to ensure that a sequence of events cannot result in the programme or whole system crashing
- Potential to re-skill into modern programming environments

## What comparison groups are available?

In occupational testing we interpret individuals' scores by comparing them against samples of applicants, incumbents etc. The following samples or norm tables are available:

- Employees within a multi national computing and software company
- Employees within a national supermarket chain

## What are the business applications?

The test has been specifically designed so that candidates with little or no experience of computing, but who nevertheless may have high aptitude for programming, are not disadvantaged. Similarly, candidates who have current experience or knowledge of computing or various computer languages are not necessarily at an advantage. The test is useful both within recruitment and selection and with more of a developmental focus to highlight strengths within people, and areas which may be desirable to develop.

## How long does it take?

The test itself is timed and lasts for 40 minutes. Practitioners should allow up to fifteen minutes beforehand to brief the candidate as part of the administration and to account for two practice questions which the candidate is asked to work through before the start of the exercise. A suggested allocation time for one full assessment, including briefing, completion of the timed test and collection of the test would be one hour.

## What materials do I need?

- Manual and users guide **AB0154**
- Additional preview information for candidates **JA0158** (10 pack)
- ABLE Series manual and users guide **AB0001**
- Questions and Answer Booklet (disposable) **AB0155** (pack of 10)
- Administrations Instructions (reusable) **AB0153**
- Score key (reusable) **AB0152**
- Information Booklet (reusable) **AB0156** (pack of 10)

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