



SYMBIOTICS

A Guide to  
**Pilot Aptitude  
Tests**

Created by Symbiotics



# Welcome

We have prepared this booklet to introduce you to what Pilot Aptitude Tests are and why they are important for both you and the airline or flight school to which you are applying. With expert guidance from our Psychology team, this guide details what is actually being tested in your Pilot Aptitude Test and how you can best prepare.

**Symbiotics** are experts in assessment and selection for Aviation roles with over 20 years of experience working within the industry. We have provided assessment & selection, training and consultancy services to air operators, airlines, pilot training organisations and other aviation businesses in over 130 locations all around the world.

## Contents

What are Pilot Aptitude Tests?	2.
Why are Pilot Aptitude Tests important?	3.
What is being tested?	4.
What are the ADAPT tests designed to measure?	5.
How can you best prepare for your Pilot Aptitude Tests?	6.
Why take practice tests?	9.

## What are Pilot Aptitude Tests?

Pilot Aptitude Tests are a form of psychometric tests that are used by airlines and aviation training organisations to provide an insight into your suitability for a role or a training process. Put simply, the tests tell the flight school how likely you are to be successful in the flight training process and ultimately in your career as a pilot.

It is very likely that you will experience Pilot Aptitude Tests at the start of your journey to becoming a pilot, prior to being accepted into a flight school and then throughout your career when you move to a different aircraft fleet, upgrade from a first officer to a captain position, move to a different operator, or move to a complimentary flying role such as instructor.

Pilot Aptitude Tests assess the core pilot competencies set out by ICAO along with any other key areas defined by the organisation that will be assessing you. Generally, a set of Pilot Aptitude Tests allows an organisation the opportunity to gain an understanding of your skills, knowledge, motivation and behaviour.

[Click here to take our Pilot Readiness Indicator and see how ready you are to start your pilot training.](#)

Read on for more information on Pilot Aptitude Tests.



## Why are Pilot Aptitude Tests Important?

Pilot Aptitude Tests are important for both you and the organisation that will be either training or recruiting you. Pilot Aptitude Tests help the airline or flight school to ensure that you have the necessary skills required to be successful in the training programme.

This is also true for you as the applicant. It is no secret that the road to becoming a pilot is an expensive path to walk and a huge part of that expense is your flight training. Pilot Aptitude Tests ensure that you have what it takes to get through the training successfully before you make a substantial

investment of both time and money.

Without a thorough selection process, it could lead to you starting your training before you are ready and being unable to reach the required standard or struggling through the course. Pilot Aptitude Tests can also provide an opportunity for feedback and identify areas that you may need to focus more on and can improve during training, as well as identifying your areas of strength, helping to support your self-improvement.



## What is being tested?

ICAO have defined a set of nine core pilot competencies that are required to be successful in the pilot role. How to measure these competencies through Pilot Aptitude Testing is covered by IATA in their guidance material on best practices in Pilot Aptitude Testing.

It is highly likely that during your Pilot Aptitude Tests you will be assessed against

a number of different criteria which measure these key areas. The tests may look different depending on the organisation you are applying to as they may prioritise different aspects according to their needs and culture.

The guidance details 6 key areas of measurement. These are:



### 1. English Language Proficiency

This is essential for the pilot role as English is the language of aviation and an ICAO level 4 rating is the minimum standard that is considered to be acceptable for a pilot to fly internationally. You will need to achieve this level in order to be successful in the role.

### 2. Basic Mental Abilities

This comprises measures of cognitive factors including, memory capacity, information processing, technical comprehension and long-term concentration as well as speed and accuracy, and spatial abilities.

### 3. Composite Mental Abilities

This encompasses the allocation of attention, multi-tasking, psycho-motor abilities and spatial abilities. These abilities are highly relevant when looking at flight path management, manual control and automation.

### 4. Operational Abilities

Operational Abilities include decision making, problem solving, workload management and situational awareness to support the management of different situations encountered in and out of the cockpit.

### 5. Social-Interpersonal Abilities

These include the ability to communicate, the ability to operate in a leadership role and as part of a team, which are all required to function as part of a flight deck crew.

### 6. Personality Traits

This looks at your professionalism, safety, ability to cope with the stress of information load and time pressure, application of procedures, and compliance with regulations.

## What are the ADAPT tests designed to measure?

Symbiotics' ADAPT tests are designed to measure your skills, aptitudes and behaviours, including psychomotor, cognitive, problem solving and decision-making skills and capacity for learning.



The tests can be split into three groups:



### Knowledge Tests

These tests are designed to measure your level of understanding in a particular subject area or topic and include tests such as Maths, Physics and English.



### Aptitude Tests

These tests look at elements such as psychomotor skills and multi-tasking and include tests such as FAST, Cognitive Reasoning, Co-ordination and Flight Test.



### Behavioural Tests

These tests are designed to look at your personality, preferences, and behaviour, as well as your motivation and coping strategies and include tests such as the ADAPT Personality Questionnaire (APQ).

## How can you best prepare for your Pilot Aptitude Tests?

It is vital that you are as prepared as possible for your Pilot Aptitude Tests, whether you are taking them at an assessment centre or remotely online from your home. Take some time to try to find out what to expect: it is likely that you will have been sent information ahead of your assessment from the training school, so make sure you read this thoroughly and try to get an understanding of the different tests that you will be taking.

With remote assessments becoming more common there is a chance you will be asked to take your Pilot Aptitude Tests at home. If this is the case it is important that you approach the assessment with the same care as an in-person assessment. There are even a few extra things that you need to consider. Make sure that you have a suitable environment to complete the tests in, which is quiet, as free from distraction

as possible and where you are unlikely to be interrupted. Be sure to check your technology beforehand and make sure that you have a good strong internet connection and that your computer meets the system requirements to be able to complete the test.

Similarly, it is important that you have all the tools required to complete the tests, for example working speakers, or a mouse and a keyboard. Try and avoid the use of mobile phones where possible because this can sometimes cause issues with resolution and can make it harder to complete the tests on a smaller screen. Never start a test unless you know that you will have the time to finish it in one attempt, and finally, before you start a test make sure you read all of the instructions carefully to make sure you understand what is expected of you.



**Our psychologists recommend preparing for the different kinds of tests in different ways:**

An illustration showing several stylized figures sitting on the letters of the word 'KNOWLEDGE TESTS'. The figures are using laptops, representing knowledge-based activities.

# KNOWLEDGE TESTS

Go back to the basics of the subject area, revisit high school/GCSE (or equivalent) textbooks or resources and refresh your understanding of the different concepts and formulas. Practice calculations in your head or in your day-to-day activities, for example adding up your shopping. It is unlikely you will be allowed to use a calculator in most cadet level tests.

An illustration showing stylized figures engaged in various activities: two people playing soccer, a person performing a yoga or gymnastic pose, two people playing musical instruments (one a double bass and one a saxophone), and a person playing a keyboard instrument.

# APTITUDE TESTS

Sports and activities such as Yoga, Aerobics or Team Sports can help to improve your co-ordination, as can taking part in a hobby such as model making, knitting or playing a musical instrument that can help to improve fine motor skills. You can play online games with a joystick to improve your hand eye co-ordination and practice multi-tasking.





# BEHAVIOURAL TESTS

Behaviour tests measure how you are likely to behave in different situations and there is no right or wrong answer; aside from taking a practice test to understand what to expect from the test, there is no other way to really prepare, although taking some time to self-reflect beforehand may be useful. Be sure to answer all of the questions openly and honestly to give the best representation of yourself.

## Why take practice tests?

One of the best ways to ensure you are as prepared as possible is to take practice versions of the tests. Practice tests give you the opportunity to familiarise yourself with the pilot aptitude testing process, to help reduce your test anxiety and enable you to perform to the best of your ability on the day. They will also help to identify any areas that you may need to devote more time to in order to further develop your knowledge or skills prior to taking your Pilot Aptitude Tests.

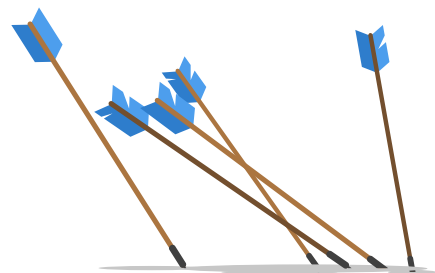
There are many practice tests available online to familiarise yourself with the type of questions you will take, however these can vary significantly so be sure to select the test that is right for you; use a reputable supplier that provides pilot specific aptitude tests to the aviation industry and make sure that the practice test that you do is reflective of the pilot aptitude test that you are likely to be faced with.

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**ADVICE FROM  
OUR PSYCHOLOGISTS:**

*“Practice and preparation really is the key, be sure to refresh your knowledge and practice as much as possible, so you can go into your tests feeling confident and ready on the day.”*

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[Click here to take our Pilot Readiness Indicator and see how ready you are to start your pilot training.](#)

At Symbiotics we have a global footprint in the aviation market place, providing assessment & selection, training and consultancy services in over 130 locations spread through 80 countries across five continents. We deliver fair, unbiased and reliable psychological testing specialising in aviation roles from Cadets to captains.

We launched our practice tests in early 2019 in an attempt to allow people to prepare as fully as possible for their Pilot Aptitude Tests and to support candidates in performing to their full potential.

It is not always obvious what you are going to be tested on and what you should prepare for, so to make it as easy as possible for you, we have grouped our practice test into different bundles of the most commonly used Pilot Aptitude Tests.

### Don't just take our word for it...



*"It's always good to be afforded the opportunity to get some practice in for an assessment in advance and I'm glad to leave a review saying that the demo test was extremely informative and has in fact allowed me to become less stressed about the actual assessment."*

Augustine Kodji



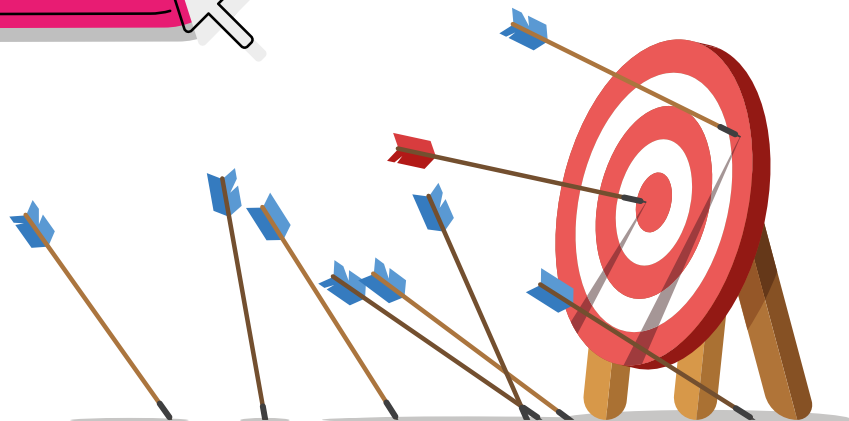
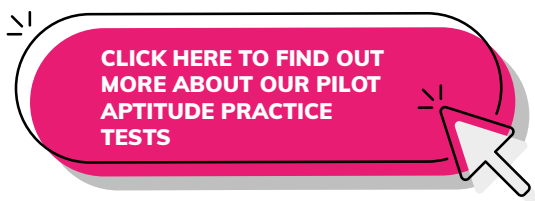
*"It was really helpful and I am sure it will leave me totally prepared for my upcoming ADAPT test."*

Krishna Jain



*"It was very challenging, and I think these tests help a lot when taking the actual exam."*

David Santiago Martinez Rojas



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**Symbiotics Ltd.** A Blakebrook business.

*We discover potential, so that you can deliver results*

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