

It's not clear what point Brian Apter's paper in *Debate* 165 is making by focusing on the prevalence of Full Scale IQ (FSIQ) scores in EP reports (Apter, 2017). Like the politician who admits to having once smoked marijuana but claims not to have inhaled, any EP who uses the BAS or the WISC is fully supporting the construct of FSIQ, regardless of whether they calculate and report that particular score - calculating it may be optional; believing in it isn't. However, unlike the politician, the IQ-supporting EP has no need to mount a defence of their practice because assessing intelligence through the use of psychometric tests is unquestionably mainstream psychology (Bloom, 2016; Ritchie, 2015; Rutherford, 2014; Fletcher & Hattie 2011). The 14% of Apter's respondents who indicated that they used no form of intelligence testing are arguably a more interesting group than the 49% who said they never calculate and report FSIQ (we assume the two groups overlap in this survey).

It is still possible to meet experienced EPs who define their professional practice in terms of *never* having administered an intelligence test. Is there another profession in which someone could make an equivalent claim and expect to be taken seriously? It's not unreasonable for Apter to speculate about the impact of private commissioning on EP assessments, but he could also have asked: is it possible that salaried employment in a local authority enables EPs to pay less attention to the research base in their parent discipline?

In education in the UK, widespread FSIQ assessment and reporting is of course hiding in plain sight in the form of the CAT tests that are routinely used in secondary schools in the maintained/academy sectors and in the independent sector. It's a fact of life for hundreds of thousands of children and young people who never meet a psychologist, as well as for adults in Higher Education who need to claim Disabled Students' Allowances. Those of us who also use and promote approaches such as dynamic/interactive assessment and curriculum-based measures may view the prevalence of FSIQ with some scepticism, but the sincerity of our feelings does not confer any kind of legitimacy on our views. And does anyone really care what we think about this particular issue anyway? While EPs debate the merits of their methods, the wider world around us goes about its business, accepting the embedded roles that various forms of intelligence testing and reporting play in our daily lives, and hopefully benefitting from them. Let's focus on how we can make the greatest possible positive impact on outcomes for the children, young people and adults we work with, rather than preparing our answers to questions no one is asking us, and our arguments for a debate that no one needs us to have.

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References

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