Test Partnership

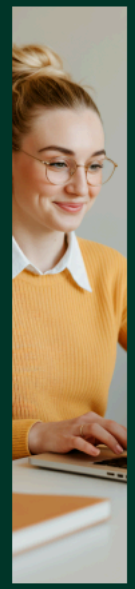
ASSESSMENT GUIDE · SIGNALS SERIES

A GUIDE FOR FINANCIAL SERVICES TALENT TEAMS

Signals Numerical Reasoning: working with the numbers that run a business

A numerical reasoning assessment built on realistic financial working contexts, in a familiar reasoning-test format redesigned to preserve its predictive signal in an AI-enabled world.

- Financial contexts, no finance knowledge
- AI-resilient by design
- Mobile-first



Prepared by Test Partnership · October 2026

For your financial services hiring teams

An assessment is only useful if candidates aren't cheating

Candidates now have AI at their fingertips. The question for every financial services recruiter is simple: how do you preserve the value of your existing assessments when part of the reasoning can be outsourced?

Legacy formats weren't built for this

Static questions, fully visible on screen, with generous timings: one screenshot into a chatbot returns a plausible answer in seconds. These formats were sound when they were designed. The environment around them has changed.

The score stops describing the candidate

If candidates can use AI to generate answers, it becomes harder to know whether a score reflects their own numerical reasoning. The assessment still produces numbers; it just no longer tells you what you bought it to tell you.

The damage concentrates at the top

In high-volume graduate, apprentice and analyst intakes, successful cheaters cluster among the highest scorers, precisely where offers are decided. Even a small number can reshape a shortlist and crowd out stronger independent candidates.

A response to the vulnerability, not a reinvention

You keep measuring the numerical reasoning that matters in financial work:

- Reading tables, charts and financial data
- Calculating and estimating accurately under pace
- Drawing the right conclusion from the figures

The format stays recognisable and defensible. What changes is how hard it is for AI to sit the test instead of the candidate.

A PROVEN TRACK RECORD IN FINANCIAL SERVICES

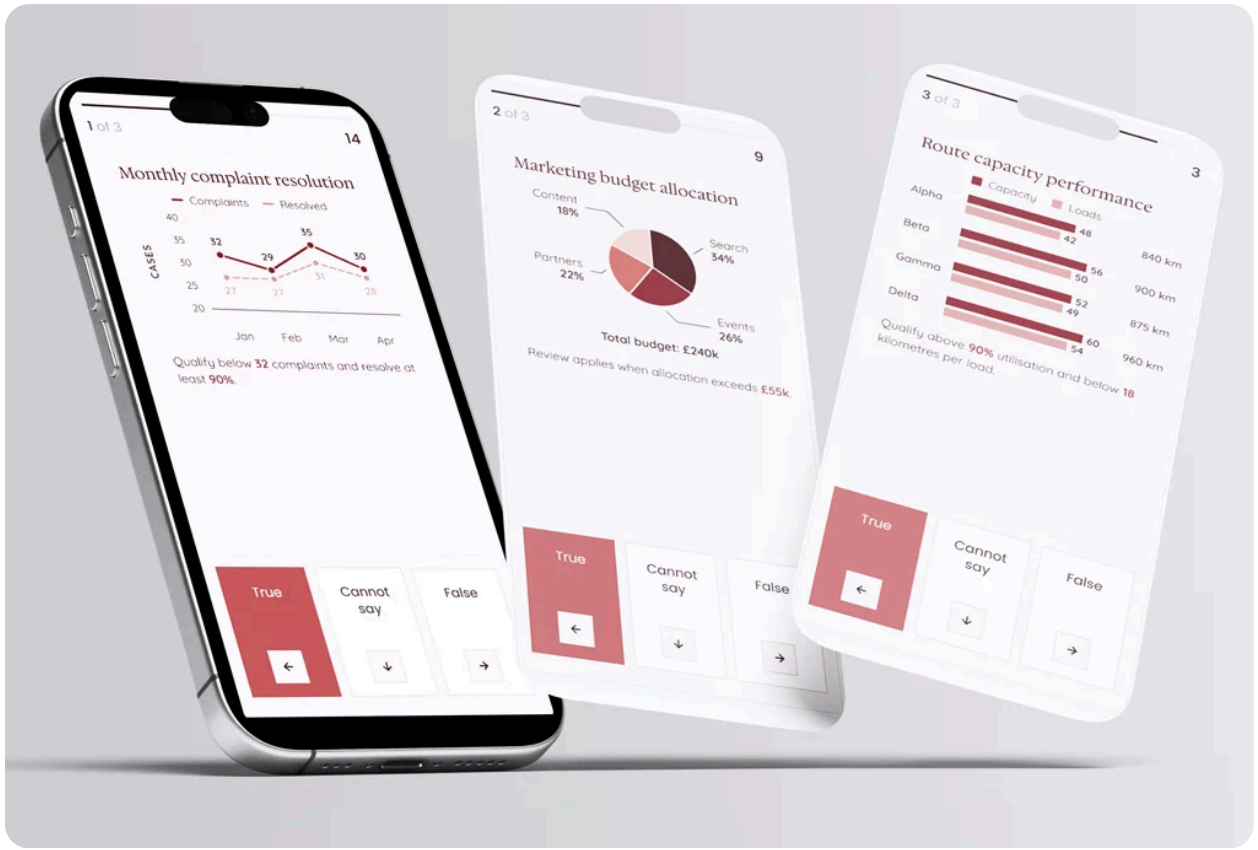
Firms including Houlihan Lokey, GSR, XTX Markets and S&W already assess with Test Partnership.

The numeracy behind sound financial work

Candidates interpret tables, charts and figures drawn from realistic financial working contexts, and reason to the correct answer. No finance knowledge is required, so scores reflect capability, not prior education.

Adaptive (CAT) | On-screen calculator | Percentile scored | Any device

WHAT CANDIDATES SEE



Built for financial services recruitment

Stems reflect the data finance professionals actually handle: budgets, performance figures, rates and growth. Fair to graduates, apprentices and lateral hires from any degree background.

What it measures

Extracting the right figures from tables and charts, working with percentages, ratios and rates of change, and reaching an accurate conclusion from the data presented.

Norm groups available

Percentiles against the comparison group you choose, including financial services and graduate norms. Norm groups stay fixed once created, so interpretation never drifts.

One stem, four questions, one at a time

Every testlet follows the same rhythm: read first, then answer. The format stays recognisable to anyone who has used established reasoning tests, while changing how much of it can ever be captured at once.

1

Review the stem

A table, chart or short financial scenario appears alone, with time to understand it before any question is shown.

2

Answer, one by one

Four questions on that stem are presented individually and in sequence. No previewing ahead, no going back.

3

Short, per-question timers

Each question has its own short limit. The stem stays visible throughout: reasoning under pace, never memory.

4

The test adapts

The next testlet matches the candidate's estimated ability, drawn from a growing bank. No two sittings look the same.

Quick, mobile-first, low burden

Completed quickly on the candidate's own device, instructions built in. Short sittings leave room for verbal or behavioural assessment.

Familiar where it matters

Candidates read data and choose the correct answer, a format recognisable from established numerical tests, so instructions stay light.

INSIDE A TESTLET

Designed to preserve the signal

When an external tool does part of the reasoning, a score stops describing the candidate. Signals is built so that independent completion stays the more attractive strategy.

Two protections, applied deliberately

Three design features protect an assessment from AI assistance: dynamic formats, short time limits and information fragmentation. Signals applies the second and third, keeping a familiar test format. Our game-based MindmetriQ™ suite adds the third, a fully dynamic format, where maximum resilience matters.

Fragmented by design

One screenshot of a conventional test can capture a whole testlet. Here, questions are exposed one at a time under short timers, so obtaining outside help means capturing, transmitting and re-entering answers repeatedly, against the clock, for every question.

Why it matters in financial hiring

In high-volume processes such as graduate schemes, apprenticeships and analyst intakes, even a few successful cheaters cluster at the top of the score distribution and crowd out stronger independent candidates. Protecting the upper tail protects the shortlist.

THE DELIBERATE MIDDLE GROUND

- **Conventional tests** are familiar, but static content, full visibility and generous timings leave them exposed.
- **Signals** keeps the familiar format and adds short timers, sequential exposure and adaptive delivery.
- **Gamified assessments** add dynamic, interactive formats: the most secure option in the range.
- **Adaptive delivery** and a growing testlet bank make leaked content, answer keys and walkthroughs close to worthless.
- **Layered controls**: candidate messaging and response-time analysis can sit alongside the assessment design itself.

No remote assessment is beyond AI assistance. Signals turns cheating into a disadvantage: a candidate who stops to consult AI falls behind one who simply answers. We monitor its resilience continuously as AI tools evolve.

Clear reporting, defensible science

Every assessment feeds a single, real-time dashboard, so hiring teams can see, compare and act on results the moment a candidate finishes.

- **Real-time dashboard** with granular, user-level access controls, so the right people see the right candidates.
- **Rank & compare**: sort and filter candidates against multiple role requirements at a glance.
- **Narrative PDF reports**: downloadable candidate profiles with tailored structured-interview guides.
- **Full data portability**: CSV and Excel exports of every score and overall job-fit.

Signals assessments are calibrated with the Rasch measurement model and delivered through computer adaptive testing, in line with British Psychological Society guidelines. Scores report as percentiles or STENs against fixed norm groups, and every question is monitored for fairness through ongoing differential item functioning analysis, with full support for extra time, screen readers, JAWS and NVDA.

> "One of the ways we identify potential in our early careers programmes is by using Test Partnership's numerical and verbal ability assessments. These tests help us quickly narrow down large applicant pools and focus on candidates most likely to succeed. The platform is easy to use, and their team provides excellent support whenever needed."
>
> **Elma Jane Castillo** · Early Careers Lead, S&W

Percentile | Import | Export | Filter | Rank

	Trait	Candidate 1	Candidate 2	Candidate 3	Candi
1	Attention to detail	62	86	42	65
2	Conscientiousness	76	71	58	26
3	Drive	18	74	39	43
4	Goal-driven	46	92	58	78
5	Methodical	86	94	23	36
6	**Integrity**	56	87	44	50
7	Resilience	24	62	12	39

✓ Fair ✓ Proven ✓ Defensible ✓ Inclusive