

# CRIAQ MANUAL

## INTRODUCTION

**CRIAQ** is a new measure designed to assess and monitor changes in levels of aggression among violent offenders. It can be used in relation to both general violence and domestic violence.

**CRIAQ** is based on current theoretical ideas concerning the causes and the display of aggression. It has a strong focus on features of aggression that are targeted in prison and probation interventions which seek to confront and change offending behaviour. In particular, **CRIAQ** focuses on problems of impulsivity and conflict resolution.

The 'What Works' literature highlights the importance of having monitoring and evaluation procedures built into offending behaviour programmes, in order to determine whether or not they are meeting aims and objectives as part of a continuous process of review. The purpose of the **CRIAQ** questionnaire is to help

- Profile individuals and monitor their progress
- Assess the effectiveness of programmes.

**CRIAQ** has been through detailed consultation stages with potential users within the UK prison and probation services. It is straightforward to administer and can be scored quickly and easily. It may be used in a one to one administration or it may be administered to a group of offenders for self-completion. It takes about ten minutes to complete. Scoring takes about five minutes.

Empirical trials have resulted in a successful preliminary validation of the scales using standard psychometric procedures and a comparison between offending types. Further validation studies are in progress.

**CRIAQ** is in three parts:

*Part 1* concerns impulsivity. It consists of 12 items that yields one composite scale which is:

### IS: Overall Score for Impulsivity

and two sub-scales

IN: Impulsivity with no aggression

IA: Impulsivity with aggression

*Parts 2 and 3* concern problems in conflict resolution. They each consist of 14 items that yield one composite scale which is

### CS: Overall Score for Problems in Conflict Resolution

and three sub-scales

CA: Aggression in conflict resolution

CP: Physical violence in conflict resolution

CC: Lack of compromise in conflict resolution

Part 2 relates to problems in conflict resolution in general. The use of the Part 3 is optional. It is aimed specifically at problems in conflict resolution with a partner. This allows, for example, a consideration of domestic violence.

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATION**

**CRIAQ** may be used in a one to one administration or it may be administered to a group of offenders. Whichever method is chosen, it must be stressed that **CRIAQ** should be completed independently without consultation or discussion with others. for individual self-completion. If **CRIAQ** is to be used for formal evaluation purposes it should be administered by someone other than the person generally responsible for the intervention with an offender.

### **One to one administration**

A one to one administration may be necessary for some individuals - for example, those with literacy difficulties. The questionnaire may also be used to help structure a one to one diagnostic interview. In these instances, **CRIAQ** should be administered in private, and in as relaxed and informal an atmosphere as possible. Some offenders are likely to produce answers which they think may be expected rather than reflecting what they actually think or feel. The risk of this will be reduced if the administrator fosters a climate that is friendly, supportive and non-judgmental. The administrator should be as informative as possible about the purpose of the questionnaire and be prepared to discuss confidentiality issues.

It is recognised that individual administrators will have different styles and it is therefore important that the administrator feels comfortable with the precise form of words used in introducing both the session and the **CRIAQ** questionnaire. A possible form of words is

This set of questions is in three parts. It deals with how you feel about yourself and your life. You will see that it includes questions about how you plan for things and how you deal with arguments. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers, the questions are about your opinions...

I am going to read out some statements and I want you to tell me whether you agree with them or not. Some you will agree with and some you will disagree with. Some you might not agree or disagree with. As I read out each one, tell me whether you Agree, Disagree, or Neither agree nor disagree.

For each of the first few items, after the offender has said that they Agree or Disagree with the statement, the administrator should ask whether they Strongly Agree (or Strongly Disagree) or Just Agree (or Just Disagree). Most people will quickly pick up the five-point scale.

When you have established the offender's response, clearly circle the appropriate label: SA, A, N, D or SD.

For the (optional) set of questions in Part 3, the following may be used:

The final set of questions is the same as the last set, but this time please think about a specific person you have recently been close to - perhaps your partner, boyfriend or girlfriend. You don't have to tell me who it is, but it is important that you have one person in mind.

Check that the offender has someone in mind before proceeding.

As a general rule each statement should be read in its original form. However, the administrator has some freedom to paraphrase or explain particular sentences if it becomes clear that the offender does not understand the statement. The questionnaire should be administered in the spirit of a relaxed interview, rather than in a formal (and possibly intimidating) manner. Avoid conversation following the offender's responses, however, and avoid leading them towards particular responses. If the offender queries the meaning of a particular word or phrase e.g., he or she might say 'It all depends on what you mean by ... (a particular word)'. The administrator should respond with something like 'don't worry about this - we are interested in your views, so just answer in the way that you think the word means.

### **Self-completion in groups**

This can be more challenging for an administrator, but may be employed for the convenience of using just one testing session for a group of offenders. Nevertheless, the questionnaire must be completed independently – without consultation or discussion with other offenders. The issues discussed under ‘one to one’ administration are relevant here. In particular, preparation becomes especially important. Individual offenders will be thinking: Who does the administrator represent? How long will it last? What if I don't know the answers? Will it be personal? What will the administrator do with my answers? The administrator should be prepared to deal with such questions. In addition, he or she will also find it helpful to check in advance for any known literacy difficulties and ensure that the room for the administration is comfortable for themselves and the offenders. The administrator may find it helpful to go through the instructions to the questionnaire with the whole group before allowing individuals to complete the questionnaire on their own.

In order to check that each individual is completing the questionnaires properly, it will be necessary for the administrator to look at what they are doing as they are completing the questions. It will be helpful for the groups to be told this in advance. Group members should be informed that they may clearly cross out an answer made in error, and then to simply circle the answer they wish to give. When the group are reminded that there are no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers, this an opportunity to stress that answers should not be not copied. Once group members begin on their own, the administrator should show interest and ask if there are any questions, but the administrator should be aware of giving people sufficient privacy to think about and complete the questions.

## **SCORING, INTERPRETATION AND PSYCHOMETRICS**

### **Scoring**

For all statements (except those reverse scored – see below)

SA = 5

A = 4

N = 3

D = 2

SD = 1

Important: when an item is indicated with

® this means it should be reverse scored.

For example, statement 3 of Part 1:

‘When I think I’m doing harm I can usually stop myself.’

‘Strongly Agree’ would be scored 1, ‘Agree’ would be scored 2 and so on.

### **Scales**

A scale score is computed by adding the scores for that scale.

Part 1 items (note: reverse score items are questions 1, 3 and 9)

**IS** Overall impulsivity score  
All 12 items: 1 ®, 2, 3 ®, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9®,  
10, 11, 12.

**IN** Impulsivity without aggression (6 items)  
Items 2, 5, 6, 8, 10, 12

**IA** Impulsivity with aggression (6 items)  
Items 1 ®, 3 ®, 4, 7, 9 ®, 11

Part 2 (and 3) items (note: reverse score items are questions 3,6,7,12 & 13)

**CS** Overall score for problems in conflict resolution  
All 14 items: 1, 2, 3 ®, 4, 5, 6 ®, 7 ®, 8, 9,10, 11, 12 ®,13 ®, 14.

**CA** Aggression in conflict resolution (6 items)  
Items 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 11

**CP** Physical violence in conflict resolution  
(4 items)  
Items 9, 10, 13 ®, 14

**CC** Lack of compromise in conflict resolution (4 items)  
Items 3 ®, 6 ®, 7 ®,12®

### **Interpretation**

A higher scale score always indicates a greater identification with that particular mode of operating. In general, the aim of interventions would be to achieve decreases in **IN**, and particularly in **IA**. Similarly, the aim would be to achieve decreases in **CA**, **CC** and particularly in **CP**. For global estimates, users may wish to report changes in **IS** and **CS**.

## Psychometrics

**Reliability.** An important indicator of the reliability of a scale is how well the relevant items ‘hold together’ to form an integrated scale. It is possible to compute one overall estimate of internal consistency for each scale. This is known as the ‘alpha coefficient’, and it is generally advised that an alpha value of .70 or above indicates good internal consistency. The Table below provides the alpha coefficients for each of the **CRIAQ** scales based on a UK sample of 145 adult offenders (70 with a violent offending history) and 45 young offenders (17 with violent offending history). The questionnaire has been designed for use with both men and women. However, to date, the validation has been with male offenders only.

SCALE		alpha
Overall impulsivity score (Part 1)	IS	0.89
Impulsivity without aggression (Part 1)	IN	0.86
Impulsivity with aggression (Part 1)	IA	0.83
Overall score for problems in conflict resolution	CS	0.82
Aggression in conflict (Part 2)	CA	0.79
Physical violence in conflict (Part 2)	CP	0.78
Lack of compromise in conflict (Part 2)	CC	0.72

**Validity.** **CRIAQ** has good face validity. It was based on key theoretical ideas and then developed by extensive discussions and trials with supervising officers and male and female offenders within the prison and probation sectors. In the psychometric context, ‘validity’ also refers to the issue of whether a test or scale actually measures what it is supposed to be measuring. The ‘concurrent validity’ of a measure can be determined by establishing whether the measure discriminates between groups that should be different on the variable that is supposedly being assessed. In the specific context of **CRIAQ**, we would expect that certain offender groups would differ in terms of their scores on various scales. Using the sample described above, all differences were in the expected direction at a statistically significant level. First, violent offenders, compared to non-violent offenders scored higher for **IA** but not for **IN**. In addition, violent offenders scored higher on **CA** and **CP**, but lower on **CC**. This set of effects was particularly marked for the young offender group.