

Reliability & Validity

Psychology

Consistency against accuracy, and the types of each.

Reliability — consistency

- Test-retest: stable over time
- Inter-rater: observers agree
- Internal consistency: items cohere
- Split-half correlation

Validity — accuracy

- Face: looks appropriate
- Concurrent: agrees with an existing measure
- Predictive: forecasts an outcome
- Ecological: generalises to real settings
- Temporal: generalises across time

THE DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

Reliability limits validity. An unreliable measure cannot be valid; a reliable one can still be invalid.

Ecological validity is the commonest weakness in laboratory psychology, and the commonest evaluation point in exams.