



PROTECTIVE + RISK OBSERVATIONS FOR ELIMINATING SEXUAL OFFENSE RECIDIVISM

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User's Guide 1.0

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Purpose

The Protective + Risk Observations For Eliminating Sexual Offense Recidivism (PROFESOR) is designed to identify risk and protective factors for individuals aged 12-25 who have engaged in, or have been accused of engaging in, illegal or otherwise abusive sexual behaviour. The goal of the PROFESOR is to provide information regarding the nature and intensity of interventions that will facilitate sexual and relationship health and, thus, eliminate sexual offense recidivism.

The PROFESOR contains only dynamic factors—individual, interpersonal, and environmental factors that are focused on the client's current functioning (throughout the past 2 months). Therefore, the PROFESOR can be used regardless of the nature of the illegal or otherwise abusive sexually abusive behaviour (i.e., contact vs. noncontact, possession or distribution of child abuse images, etc.) and regardless of the level of acknowledgment by the individual (i.e., full acknowledgement, minimization, or categorical denial). Given that the PROFESOR contains only dynamic factors, it can also serve as a measure of treatment change over time.

User Qualifications

The PROFESOR should be completed by mental health or criminal justice professionals who have training and experience regarding assessment with adolescents and emerging adults who have engaged in illegal and otherwise abusive sexual behavior. Given the age span for the PROFESOR (ages 12 to 25), it is also critical that users have training regarding developmental considerations for adolescents and emerging adults. For example, what constitutes good self-regulation (Item #11) at age 14 will be quite different from what constitutes good self-regulation at age 24. The client's age should be considered when applying the coding rules for each of the 20 factors on the PROFESOR.

Prior to using the PROFESOR for clinical, administrative, forensic, or research purposes, users should be very familiar with the PROFESOR Coding Guidelines and this User's Guide.



New users should practice coding the PROFESOR with several practice files and compare and discuss their ratings with other professionals who have had training and experience with the PROFESOR.

Completing the PROFESOR

The PROFESOR is a structured checklist of risk and protective factors that is completed by a mental health or criminal justice professional following a comprehensive assessment: an assessment focused on the client's current social, emotional, familial, and sexual functioning. Ideally, ratings for the PROFESOR are based on multiple sources of information, including interview(s) with clients, interview(s) with parents/caregivers/support persons, document review (e.g., reports from school/employer, child protection, police, previous service providers), and the use of selected psychological measures.

It is necessary for users to refer to the complete set of PROFESOR Coding Guidelines for every rating rather than simply utilizing the summary page. Failure to use the complete set of Coding Guidelines will likely result in erroneous ratings, as factor labels alone do **not** provide sufficient detail for coding purposes.

Wherever possible and feasible, it is helpful to have a colleague who also knows the client well to complete the PROFESOR independently and then discuss final ratings. Given that the PROFESOR contains only dynamic factors, and it is focused on a 2-month time period, PROFESOR ratings based solely on closed client files are likely to be rather inaccurate. As such, retrospective research based on archival files is not typically going to provide accurate information regarding the validity of the PROFESOR.

Coding Considerations

Specific wording is provided in the Coding Guidelines so that evaluators can determine whether a factor is clearly Protective or clearly Risk. When a factor is neither clearly Protective nor clearly Risk, then the rating of Neutral would apply.

The timeframe to consider for PROFESOR ratings is "throughout the past 2 months". If a factor has not been clearly Protective or clearly Risk throughout the 2-month period under consideration, then it is rated as Neutral.

For some clients who are in controlled and supervised residential settings, current ratings on the PROFESOR may not be representative of the individual's functioning if they were to be in a



less restrictive environment. The PROFESOR can still be used to rate an individual’s current functioning; however, commentary regarding anticipated differences with a change in the level of supervision and/or external control may be warranted.

When information from different sources is markedly conflicting (e.g., client interview vs. psychological testing, client interview vs. caregiver interview, validated psychological test vs. unvalidated questionnaire), it will be important to weigh the validity of the information provided and make a reasonable determination accordingly. If the only source of information for a given factor is of questionable validity, users are cautioned about making determinations that are clearly “Protective” or “Risk”.

Results

Factors rated as Risk are clearly specific intervention targets for the client. Interventions may entail different forms and degrees of counseling and/or supervision and/or support. Factors rated as Neutral will also require some follow-up intervention, however, as the ultimate goal is for all PROFESOR factors to be Protective. It is also important to stress that it may be necessary to consider interventions for some Protective factors to ensure that they remain Protective for the individual.

A final PROFESOR category can be assigned as per the formulae at the bottom of the coding sheet. The final categories correspond to the level of intensity of intervention (i.e., treatment, supervision, support). As noted earlier, these ratings are not intended to be predictors of future behaviour.

Suggested interpretation for PROFESOR Categories

Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4	Category 5
Predominantly Protective	More Protective Than Risk	Predominantly Balanced	More Risk Than Protective	Predominantly Risk
Very low intensity, if any, of intervention required focused on future sexual and relationship health.	Low intensity of intervention required focused on future sexual and relationship health.	Moderate intensity of intervention required focused on future sexual and relationship health.	High intensity of intervention required focused on future sexual and relationship health.	Very high intensity of intervention required focused on future sexual and relationship health.

Although the computations required to determine the summary category are relatively straightforward, some users may experience challenges. As such, a Scoring Assistant has been made available to download at (www.profesor.ca/scoring-assistant/). To utilize the Scoring Assistant,



download the file and select “Enable Editing” in Excel. After entering the client and evaluator names and date, then enter an “X” for each factor in the appropriate column (i.e., Protective, Neutral, or Risk). Note that the red error warnings at the top of the page will disappear when the following two conditions have been met: (i) only one “X” has been entered for each factor and (ii) all factors have been rated. Please note that no information is saved on the PROFESOR website; rather, the tabulation page is displayed only on your system.

Timing of Assessments

An assessment with the PROFESOR at the outset of service will provide the client and the evaluator with information regarding the specific goals of intervention and the suggested level of intensity of the overall intervention. An assessment mid-way through intervention will provide clients and those involved in their care with information regarding changes that have been observed regarding the 20 dynamic factors on the PROFESOR, and it will highlight clients’ strengths and remaining intervention needs. An assessment at the conclusion of the intervention will highlight clients’ strengths, and it will point to any outstanding intervention needs (i.e., Risk or Neutral factors that are outstanding and/or Protective factors that require continued support).

Training

Formal training for the PROFESOR is available through in-person workshops with the developer or through live (www.gifrinc.com/profesor/) or on-demand (www.gifrinc.com/profesor-demand-training/) web-based training through Multihealth Systems. Formal training will provide the user with information regarding the development of the PROFESOR and opportunities to practice applying the coding criteria to numerous case examples.

Limitations

Although research is currently underway, the PROFESOR has not yet been subjected to empirical scrutiny; as such, conclusions should be viewed as speculative. It is also important to stress that the PROFESOR is not intended as a “risk-prediction” tool. Although researchers may well find that there is a correlation between recidivism and the final category rating on the PROFESOR, the predictive validity is likely to be only moderate, at best, which is similar to that observed with existing “risk-prediction” tools regarding sexual and nonsexual recidivism. Clinical, administrative, and forensic decisions should never be based solely on the results of the PROFESOR.