



The SASC Diagnostic Assessment Report Format 2025

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- Who produced this updated format?
- Why has it been re-written?
- Key features.
- Implications for assessment practice.
- Your questions.

Introducing...The Report Format Working Group



Caroline Holden (Chair)

With professional qualifications and long experience in specialist (SpLD) teaching and assessment, Caroline joined the SASC board in 2017, where, until October 2024, she acted for several years as vice-chair and had an additional role as assessment issues coordinator. Since then she has stayed on in a consultancy role for SASC, leading the report format working group to produce the updated diagnostic assessment report format. She is one of the authors of the Delphi dyslexia UK study.



Jen McDermott

Jen is an experienced independent specialist teacher-assessor with 25 years of experience across various age groups and educational settings. She has worked extensively with Patoss as the Lead of the APC Review Team and has delivered specialised training courses to support assessors in the ongoing development of their professional practice. Jen has been a Director of SASC since 2014.



Sarah Bevan

Sarah qualified as a specialist teacher assessor in 2001 and since then has worked exclusively in the field of SpLD as a SENCo and assessor. She gained her APC in 2007, joined Patoss in 2015 and has held her current role of APC Team Lead since 2021.

Rachael McMullen

Rachael has significant experience in the field of Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD), as a teacher, assessor, and trainer. She spent 10 years as SENCO in a specialist school for pupils with SpLD and has held an Assessment Practising Certificate (APC) since 2010. Currently, as Head of Dyslexia Support at the Helen Arkell Dyslexia Charity, she manages a large team of specialists who deliver over 1,400 assessments and 5,000 hours of specialist tuition a year.



Katherine Kindersley

Katherine founded and directed Dyslexia Assessment and Consultancy, an organisation which worked for 25 years providing specialist assessment and support, as well as training and advice on reasonable adjustments. She is a qualified expert witness. Co-author of 'Dyslexia: Assessment & Reporting', The Patoss Guide, Hodder Education. She worked with Professors Anna Barnett, Amanda Kirby and Elisabeth Hill to develop the SASC DCD / Dyspraxia guidance (2020) and with Professor Asherson and Dr Anna Smith, to develop the SASC ADHD guidance (2021). She has been a Director of SASC since 2013.



The Report Format Working Group



Alice Thomas

Alice is a Specialist Teacher Assessor who works for a Multi Academy Trust in East London serving a diverse population, working closely with local NHS services. Alice has been teaching learners with additional needs since 2008, and is passionate that every individual who requires it should be able to access assessment. She recently joined SASC in the Assessment Issues Coordinator role and also works as an AMBDA tutor for the UCL Specific Learning Difficulties Level 7 course.

Janet Goring

Janet is a specialist assessor and member of STEC. She chaired the SASC working group which, in association with other practitioners and key academics in the field produced the SASC Guidance on Assessment of Mathematics Difficulties and Dyscalculia 2025.

Gill Cochrane

Gill is a specialist assessor and trainer with Dyslexia Action. She was a member of the working group who produced the SASC Guidance on Assessment of Mathematics Difficulties and Dyscalculia 2025.

Sally-Ann Morrison

Sally-Ann has been an active diagnostic assessor since 1996 and is a long term APC holder. She is the Founder of Praxis CPD, providing training and mentoring for SpLD Specialists, and is a former Patoss APC Reviewer.

Lynn Greenwold, trained as a SpLD specialist teacher/assessor, was on the DfES SpLD Working Group which led to the formation of SASC and served as CEO of Patoss for many years. Chair and founder member of SASC and former CEO of PATOSS

Also consulted: Louise Van Der Valk, Chair of STEC, Kate Blundell, Sarah Guest, Julia Carroll and Mark Loveday, The SASC Board, SpLD course leaders and SpLD professional body APC renewal teams.



Why has the report format been re-written?

- The initial **SASC consultation on a definition for dyslexia**.
- The **Delphi dyslexia UK** study.
- SASC-commissioned guidance for the **assessment of specific mathematics difficulties and dyscalculia**.
- Ongoing requests for a **degree of flexibility** to be built into the report format.
- The listing (with published guidance from the SpLD Test Evaluation Committee - STEC) of **test batteries** (some embodying new test philosophies and test constructs) **which extend the range of assessment options**.

Key features 1.

- The report format is **available in three forms**: the format minus the additional guidance in comments, the format with the comments, and the additional guidance comments collected together as a separate document.
- Professional bodies and training providers will be offering **CPD** and there is a **long run-in period** before its use becomes compulsory in **January 1st 2027**.
- **All guidance** for assessment of **all SpLDs at any age** in **one document**.

Key features 2.

- Each section of the format supported by a **rationale** for its inclusion.
- Clear guidance as to **essential** and **optional components of assessment**.
- The **diagnostic decision** section of the format focuses on gathering together converging evidence from assessment that meets the definition of the SpLD being identified.
- **Flexibility** regarding in **what order certain sections** can be **reported**.
- A new **Extended Investigation** section.

Implications for assessment practice 1.

- I am still not clear why some areas of assessment are compulsory and others optional? *and* How will greater choice of testing ensure consistency?
- How will I choose which tests to use?
- Why isn't there a separate format for testing for specific maths difficulties? *and* Do I now have to test maths skills?
- Could you say more about 'working within professional boundaries'?

Implications for assessment practice 2.

- What is the difference between action points and recommendations? *and* Why doesn't the recommendations section follow the diagnostic decision section?
- Why is there very little space in this format to cover emotional or mental health difficulties associated with many SpLDs?
- Would it be useful to produce diagrammatic pathways showing how the report formats could work for assessments which end up focusing mainly on literacy, mathematics or motor coordination and/or attentional difficulties?

An assessment primarily focused on literacy

Cover sheet
Contents
Diagnostic decision
Background information
Test conditions

Areas of assessment Attainment

Language and reasoning

Cognitive Presentation

Will include:

Receptive and/or expressive language

Phonological awareness

Where there are no, or insufficient indicators of unexpectedness, or where global learning difficulties are suspected,

verbal reasoning and/or non-verbal/visual reasoning/pattern or design recognition/construction.

Could also include:

Listening comprehension

Will include:

Single-word reading

Speeded sight-word reading and speeded non-word decoding

Reading comprehension of continuous prose

Single word spelling

Prose writing

Could also include:

Reading sub-skills
Non-word reading

Phonological awareness

Listening comprehension

Orthographic skills

Handwriting speed/legibility

Copying

Typing

Basic computation

Graded computation

Mathematics attainment, reasoning and problem-solving

Will include:

RAN
Verbal working memory
Phonological memory

Could also include:

Coding, symbol search, cancellation tasks

Retrieval fluency tasks, semantic or phonological

Phonological awareness

Orthographic processing

Visual-motor speeded tasks

Visual memory

Attention

Observations of filtering/decision-making/ problem-solving

Visual working memory

Spatial processing

Mental imagery/visualisations

Mental rotation skills

Further non-verbal reasoning

Visual perception/other visual processing skills

Extended investigation

Recommendations and appendices

An assessment primarily focused on mathematics

Cover sheet
Contents
Diagnostic decision
Background information
Test conditions

Areas of assessment

Attainment

Language and reasoning

Cognitive Presentation

Will include:

Receptive and/or expressive language

Phonological awareness (if there are additional concerns about literacy)

Where there are no, or insufficient indicators of unexpectedness, or where global learning difficulties are suspected, **verbal reasoning and/or non-verbal/visual reasoning/pattern or design recognition/construction.**

Could also include:

Listening comprehension

Will include:

**Basic computation
Graded computation
Mathematics attainment,
Mathematics reasoning and
problem-solving**

Could also include:

**Tests of specific mathematics areas
Informal/qualitative mathematics assessments
Single-word reading
Speeded sight-word reading and speeded non-word decoding
Reading comprehension of continuous prose
Single word spelling
Prose writing
Reading sub-skills
Non-word reading
Listening comprehension
Orthographic skills
Handwriting speed/legibility.
Copying/Typing**

Will include:

**RAN
Verbal working memory
Symbolic magnitude comparison
Visual working memory and at least one of:
Spatial processing
Mental imagery/visualisation
Mental rotation skills**

Could also include:

**Magnitude estimation
Counting/sequencing/ordering numbers
Non-symbolic magnitude comparison
Mastery of mathematics language.
Visual-motor speeded tasks
Visual memory
Attention
Observations of filtering/decision-making/problem-solving
Spatial processing
Mental imagery/visualisations
Mental rotation skills
Further non-verbal reasoning
Visual perception/other visual processing skills
Phonological memory
Coding, symbol search, cancellation tasks
Retrieval fluency tasks, semantic or phonological
Orthographic processing**

Extended investigation

Recommendations and appendices

An assessment where there are concerns about motor coordination and/or attention

Cover sheet
Contents,
Diagnostic decision
Background information
Test conditions

Extended investigation

Areas of assessment Attainment

Language and reasoning

Cognitive Presentation

Will include:

Receptive and/or expressive language

Phonological awareness, if there are concerns about literacy

Where there are no, or insufficient indicators of unexpectedness, or where global learning difficulties are suspected, **verbal reasoning and/or non-verbal/visual reasoning/pattern or design recognition/construction.**

Will include:

Single-word reading

Speeded sight-word reading and speeded non-word decoding

Reading comprehension of continuous prose

Single word spelling

Prose writing

Will include:

RAN
Verbal or visual working memory

Could also include:

Any of the tests in any of the other sections of the format, at the discretion of the assessor and depending on the background information and emerging concerns at assessment, including the possibility of co-occurring specific difficulties and identification of more than one SpLD.

Recommendations and appendices

Your questions.

- Fire away!