



SASC CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT for 2024-25

Welcome to this 2025 AGM.

SASC continues its core remit by working in a highly collegiate way to ensure that best assessment practice is available and maintained. We work to support our professionals and their learners to underpin standards in assessment practice across the range of specific learning difficulties assessors are called upon to assess.

This year has seen the culmination of a number of projects to update and integrate assessment guidance. These have included

- Revised Report Format with accompanying guidance
- Updated guidance on Assessment of Mathematics difficulties and dyscalculia
- Updated Visual Difficulties Guidance
- Supporting onward referrals with recommended templates
- And coming soon Updated guidance on DCD/dyspraxia

Report Format for Diagnostic Assessments of SpLDs

We have issued our update of the Report Format for Diagnostic Assessments of SpLDs with accompanying guidance. In producing the updated format we have taken into consideration a very wide range of issues and recent developments.

It was important to ensure that the Delphi definition of dyslexia was reflected in the updated format and that assessors are encouraged, where appropriate, to use this most recent definition.

With the hard to incorporate clear assessment advice for assessors with the appropriate training and qualification wishing to investigate this area of attainment.

This format, used for full diagnostic assessments by assessors (both specialist assessors and psychologists] is required where a report written for an individual at any age might later be used as evidence for application for the Disabled Students' Allowance in Higher Education on the basis of an identified specific learning difficulty. The purpose of the format is to guide assessors as to best consistent, evidence-based assessment practice in the identification of a SpLD. The format can be used now but will be required to be used for diagnostic assessment reports completed from **1 January 2027**.

We have incorporated the additional guidance into the format document so they can be read together. However, to assist accessibility for a range of users, we have made the format and guidance available in 3 different ways. Additional guidance and explanatory detail is provided throughout in numbered comment boxes, allowing assessors immediate access to further information and clarification.

In producing the format and additional guidance we shared drafts with course leaders and other training providers, academics, practitioners both specialist teacher assessors and psychologists, our maths and dyscalculia working party as well as our STEC and SASC board members.

STEC

STEC has worked assiduously updating the list of recommended assessment tools to account for more recently available and developing assessment practice. This has involved substantial work on the part of the committee to incorporate and address different constructs underlying the range of assessment tools available. A presentation at the 2025 Annual Conference mapped assessment materials to the new format which should aid assessors in selecting tests and putting together their own test toolkit.

Maths difficulties guidance

Our Maths and dyscalculia working party has produced updated guidance which was published in March of this year. The key aims of this SASC guidance are to provide updated, evidence based, operationally effective definitions and procedures on the assessment of specific learning difficulties in mathematics. It is also intended to increase assessors' understanding of current research evidence surrounding maths difficulties for a range of stakeholders.

Working with a wide range of professionals and other organisations

We continue to broaden our consultations with groups with regular meetings and with a range of other professionals in our working groups, with course leaders, and our test evaluation committee, STEC, is working with the BPS test standards committee to share information and reviews of relevant tests.

We continue to update guidance in response to questions received and to address updates on SASC work, updated assessment guidance and new developments. These are announced on the website and circulated to SASC members by email. Topics to be addressed during the next year include:

Planned work for 2025-2026

- Qualification framework
 - An APEL route to dyscalculia assessment is being developed by professional bodies to come into effect whilst training opportunities are being developed.
 - Training pathways to become a specialist assessor
 - Training pathways for maths assessment informed by maths difficulties work.
 - Training requirements for those wishing to move from pre-16 to post-16 assessment and vice versa
- Course approval - following the closure of the BDA Accreditation Board SASC will be expanding its review of assessor training courses
- SASC holds monthly meetings to respond to enquiries received. We will be looking to publish on the website some FAQs with relevant responses.
- AI and assessments
- Guidance for independent assessors on opportunities for establishing closer links with schools.
- Explore benefits of SASC's becoming a charity
- Updates on other SASC initiatives

Our Conference this year around the theme 'Updated guidance and integration into practice' is exceedingly well-attended and I am delighted to see so many making links in supporting professional practice. Due to the large uptake for our webinars, I am pleased to announce that we are making the recordings available to access for a full 12 months.

I want to acknowledge Alice Thomas, who has joined SASC as our Assessment Issues Coordinator. She is an experienced Specialist Teacher Assessor working within a Multi Academy Trust. She brings her wide-ranging experience in investigating, diagnosing and teaching children and adults with neurodiversity and her collaborative work with pediatricians, speech and language therapists, educational psychologists, and occupational therapists.

I would like to thank all members of the SASC board, STEC and our Cross-Standardisation Committee as well as all the advisors who have contributed to our consultations and policy development. Members of the SASC board, STEC and other subcommittees contribute their time voluntarily.

They have given so generously of their time, and expertise; and also, you, our members, who through your communications and collaboration help develop policy and bring further issues to be explored. Working together we strengthen guidance and standards in assessment practice and training.

The current directors and all observers are named at the end of this report.

Once again, I want to invite others to join in supporting our consultations and developing practice. Please write to us with your interests.

I want to acknowledge and thank those who have worked so hard to produce our guidances this year. All are dedicated professionals who have provided their expertise free of charge.

Through participation in and working with the **SASC Report Format Working Group**:

Caroline Holden – working group lead
Alice Thomas – assessment issues coordinator
Sarah Bevan
Kate Blundell
Julia Carroll
Gill Cochrane
Janet Goring
Sarah Guest
Katherine Kindersley
Mark Loveday
Jen McDermott
Rachael McMullen
Sally-Ann Morrison
Louise Van Der Valk
Lia Castiglione
The SASC Board, SpLD Course Leaders
Professional Body APC renewal teams.

Through participation in **the SASC Working Group on Maths Difficulties and Dyscalculia** and/or by providing research.

Janet Goring (Chair), Member of SASC Test Evaluation Committee
Kate Blundell, SASC Board member
Prof Brian Butterworth, Emeritus Professor of Cognitive Neuropsychology, University College, London
Prof Steve Chinn
Gill Cochrane, Dyslexia Action
Dr Ann Dowker, University Research Lecture, Dept. of Experimental Psychology, University of Oxford
Brenda Ferrie, Level 7 Course developer
Dr Camilla Gilmore, Professor of Mathematical Cognition Loughborough University
Dr Thomas Hunt, Associate Professor in Psychology, University of Derby
Pete Jarrett, Tutorum

Sue Johnston-Wilder, Associate Professor of Mathematics Education, University of Warwick
 Dr Kathleen Kelly, Manchester Metropolitan University
 Lynn Lovell, Head of Professional Standards, British Dyslexia Association
 Anne McLoughlin, Edge Hill University
 Dr Kinga Morsanyi, Reader in Mathematical Cognition, Loughborough University
 Sarah Reay, Head of Accredited Learning and Development, PATOSS
 Rebecca Thomson, Education Access
 Prof Jo Van Hervegen, Professor of Developmental Psychology and Education, UCL
 Alice Voute, Psychologist

Updating our **Visual Difficulties Guidance**

Prof Jim Gilchrist
 Prof Aleks Mankowski
 Alice Thomas
 Anna Smith
 Mark Loveday

Updating our **DCD/Dyspraxia Guidance** – expected late 2025

Prof Anna Barnett
 Prof Amanda Kirby
 Prof Elisabeth Hill

STEC

STEC Chair: Louise van der Valk
 Vice Chair: Julia Kender
 Kate Blundell
 Armande Fryatt
 Janet Kruger
 Jess Simmonite
 Dr Caro Strover
 Dr Jane Yeomans

SASC Board

Directors	Institution Represented (or Affiliation)	Term
Lynn Greenwold (Chair)	Independent	2024-2028
Julia Kender (Financial Director)	Independent	2024-2028
Sarah Bevan	Patoss	2022-2026
Kate Blundell	Independent	2025-2029
Helen Duncan	Independent	2024-2028

Katherine Kindersley	Independent	2025-2029
Mark Loveday	Independent	2023-2027
Michelle Luciano	Independent	2023-2027
Jennifer McDermott	Independent	2022-2026
Rachael McMullen	HADC	2022-2026
Lynn Lovell	BDA	2023-2027
Anna Smith	DA	2022-2026
Mark Turner	Independent	2022-2026
Jane Miller	PASSHE	2023-2027

Currently an observer but joining as a director after this AGM: Alice Thomas

Observers: Hannah Farndon BPS, Denise Thornton ACHIPP, Sarah Guest, Alison Szalay, Sharon Dobson Waters

Lynn Greenwold, Chair
June 2025