

Unit Title: **Assessing individuals for dyslexia/specific learning difficulties**

OCR unit number	Unit 3
Unit accreditation number	J/503/3908
Level:	7
Credit value:	9
Guided learning hours:	20

Unit purpose and aim

This unit will equip the candidate to plan and carry out assessment sessions with an individual experiencing difficulties in learning. The candidate will also learn how to interpret the outcomes of assessment and feed back any necessary information to relevant parties.

Learning Outcomes <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>	Exemplification
1 Be able to judge appropriate courses of action following referrals for individuals experiencing difficulties in learning	1.1 Analyse factors underpinning referrals 1.2 Identify courses of action 1.3 Justify courses of action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenting difficulties • Current personal educational and/or employment needs • At risk factors • Unnecessary referrals • Family, medical and educational/employment history • Presenting strengths and weaknesses • Relevant personnel e.g. teacher, educational psychologist, speech and language therapist, human resources • Data protection issues • Range of purpose, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ exam/access arrangements ○ career ○ school choice ○ access to higher education ○ disabled student allowances

Learning Outcomes <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>	Exemplification
2 Be able to design assessment sessions based on background information for individuals experiencing difficulties in learning	2.1 Justify design of assessment sessions to suit the needs of individuals, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessment procedures • resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational stage, age and current attainments of learner • Standardised and criterion based tests for reading writing and numeracy skills, underlying verbal and non-verbal ability and diagnostic tests to include phonology and working memory • timings • environment • assessment resources • materials
3 Be able to apply regulations and guidance regarding access arrangements for examinations for individuals with learning difficulties	3.1 Justify selection of assessment tests to provide information necessary for access arrangement applications 3.2 Justify recommendations for access arrangements for individuals with dyslexia/specific learning difficulties	<p>Please note that this Learning Outcome refers to <i>specific</i> Learning difficulties, not general learning difficulties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current and up to date regulations and guidance of awarding body or national organisation which oversees access arrangements at an appropriate level. • Roles and responsibilities of staff in chosen educational setting. • Having regard to due dates/deadlines and time needed by others to fulfil their own responsibilities. • Candidate should choose from one educational level or setting, where learners are involved in seeking accreditation, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRIMARY: KS2 National Curriculum tests. • SECONDARY: Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), vocational qualifications • POST 16 Joint Council for General Qualifications (JCQ), vocational qualifications, driving test, professional organisations and universities

Learning Outcomes <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>	Exemplification
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce clear and succinct information for others to use. • Information aimed at two separate groups. Either: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Parents or carers of learner (In primary settings) OR learner themselves (Secondary and post 16) b. Other teachers or lecturers as appropriate. • Information communicated in an accessible format for others e.g. learners, parents, teachers, lecturers. • Reports give relevant information only in clear, brief and accessible manner. • Reports recommend appropriate access arrangements for learner. • Reports are word-processed using standard English, accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar. • Guidance - at a chosen educational setting.
<p>4 Be able to conduct assessment sessions</p>	<p>4.1 Implement assessment for individuals with dyslexia/specific learning difficulties</p>	<p>The outcome must be a full diagnostic assessment report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome individuals, introduce self, process and aim of session • Explain purpose and nature of tests • Invite individuals to voice own views and concerns • Provide ongoing feedback to individuals • Expected professional behaviour in a test situation • Verbal and non-verbal communication • Feedback provided according to the parameters of standardised tests

Learning Outcomes <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>	Exemplification
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sequence activities to provide balance and variety • Administer tests according to test manuals • Manage time to elicit useful information • Administration instructions in test manuals • The purpose of test and procedures used • Adaptation in exceptional circumstances • Amending plan to suit individual needs if required • Record individuals' responses • Record behaviours and strategies in different tasks • Discreet methods of recording responses and observations • Metacognition
<p>5 Be able to interpret outcomes of assessment</p>	<p>5.1 Interpret individuals' performance in standardised tests using test manuals</p> <p>5.2 Compare profiles of individuals' attainments against expected standards</p> <p>5.3 Analyse outcomes of the assessment process to determine the nature and extent of individuals' learning difficulties</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record raw scores • Calculate and record derived scores • Comment on validity of scores • Derived scores: percentiles, standard scores, age equivalent, confidence levels • Intrinsic and extrinsic factors affecting validity • Normal development of literacy • Skills involved in spelling/reading/free writing/numeracy • Analyse non verbal ability responses • Describe word reading skills and strategies • Miscue analysis of text reading • Describe reading fluency and comprehension • Assess spelling attainments

Learning Outcomes <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>	Exemplification
		<p>and skills at word level</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess spelling attainments/ free writing/numeracy skills • Assess attainment in relation to learner's every day needs and skills at text level • Normal development of verbal ability • Obstacles to development of verbal skills • Normal development of non-verbal skills • Cognitive processing, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ visual ○ speed of processing ○ memory ○ phonology • Obstacles to development of non-verbal ability • Make reference to background information • Differential diagnosis • Neurodiversity factors
<p>6 Be able to communicate outcomes of assessment for individuals with dyslexia/specific learning difficulties to others involved in individuals' education</p>	<p>6.1 Justify outcomes of assessment to others involved in individuals' education</p> <p>6.2. Apply procedures for maintaining records of discussions and feedback</p> <p>6.3. Review and revise recommendations based on feedback</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Others may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ individuals ○ colleagues ○ other professionals involved in supporting individuals ○ non professionals involved with individuals ○ awarding bodies • Overall pattern of abilities and attainments summarised and related to dyslexia/specific learning difficulties profiles • Skills and strategies are viewed from a developmental perspective • Strengths and weaknesses compared • Findings related to background information

Learning Outcomes <i>The learner will:</i>	Assessment Criteria <i>The learner can:</i>	Exemplification
		<p>and reasons for referral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Succinct, clearly presented and structured language accessible to recipients • Reasons for referral given and summary of background information including reports from others • Technical terms explained • Conclusions explained • Main recommendations set out in form of long term needs and short term targets • Feedback to learners, parents/carers, teachers, colleagues, employers and support staff • Data protection issues, tribunals, employment law case conferences, unemployment • Learner, parent, carer, family members

Assessment

This unit is centre assessed and quality assured, and externally verified by OCR.

Evidence requirements

When completing evidence requirements it is essential to refer to the Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria as laid out in the table above.

Candidates must provide all of the evidence identified below. All evidence must be produced independently. Candidates must:

1 Learning Outcome 1

Produce a case history of one individual learner which summarises the reasons and background to the referral.

2 Learning Outcome 1

Produce two questionnaires/interview schedules (e.g. one for the learner's parents and another for class teacher/learning support tutor).

3 Learning Outcome 2

Produce an assessment session plan, including brief notes explaining the reasons for choice of assessment procedures and resources, showing how these have been devised and prepared to meet the needs of the individual learner.

4 Learning Outcomes 4 & 5

Carry out **full** diagnostic assessment with one learner, at least one hour of which **must** be observed by an assessor.

The candidate must:

- initiate and sustain a positive relationship with a learner in an assessment situation
- administer tests correctly
- make accurate records during assessment
- manage the session so that the maximum useful information is gained during a limited time.

For the observed session, the candidate's assessor must complete a Diagnostic Assessment Observation Report confirming that the assessment objectives have been met. The observation report must be completed using the OCR-prepared form for this purpose.

5 Learning Outcomes 2 & 5

Produce a brief description of the purpose of all tests and assessment procedures used.

Produce a short diagnostic report relating to the standardised and non-standardised assessment carried out, concerning the learner's specific learning difficulties.

6 Learning Outcome 3

Prepare and deliver a short presentation (minimum 5 minutes, maximum 10 minutes) about access arrangements for learners with literacy difficulties. This should be aimed at other professionals in the institution, or context in which the candidate intends to work, but will be delivered to peer group, work colleagues etc. This can be assessed live in centres, or produced as DVD evidence provided to centre assessors.

Produce a short rationale explaining educational setting or context of one learner with literacy difficulties and his/her examination requirements or choices.

Show evidence that appropriate tests have been chosen and administered correctly by the candidate.

Produce a report to justify access arrangements relevant to educational setting of learner and in compliance with national regulatory requirements. This should consider the wider context of learning history, provision, earlier testing and any required current testing.

7 Learning Outcome 3

Carry out a **supervised** assessment to determine access arrangements for one learner to include cognitive processing and attainment.

8 Learning Outcome 6

Compile a report of the assessment data collected to include:

- interpretation of a variety of assessment result profiles

- correct scoring of all standardised tests, with raw scores converted into standard scores, percentile ranks and/or age equivalents together with accurate verbal descriptions of these.

Full diagnostic reports:

NB: Candidates must complete three diagnostic reports during this unit:

LO3: in the context of access arrangements

LO4 and LO5: one full diagnostic report and one short diagnostic report

A full diagnostic report should include:

- cognitive processing
- underlying ability
- attainment
- relevant personal history

The purpose of the report is not only to offer a diagnostic label, but should explore strengths and weaknesses and how these will impact on the learner's environment. Furthermore, recommendations should include skills and strategies for support learning.

Guidance on assessment and evidence requirements

Candidates will administer tests taking into account the learner's composure and comfort, and interpret results of test and other evidence of learner's skills.

Candidates should be aware that it is not always appropriate to carry out assessments, e.g. when a learner is already being supported by, or has recently been assessed by, another professional and so careful investigation of the background to the referral is necessary.

Tests should be carefully chosen to maximise understanding of the learner's strengths and weaknesses and aid planning of effective learning support. They may include both standardised and criterion-referenced tests and should be appropriate for the age/ability of the learner. For formal assessment reports, the use of recent editions of tests based on up-to-date theory and research are expected.

It is expected that candidates will be observed for a minimum of 1 hour during which time correct administration of a range of standardised tests and assessment procedures should be seen. It is not necessary for assessors to observe each session 'live' – assessment may be carried out through the observation of a video/DVD recording. It is worth noting that candidates can learn a great deal from observing themselves via a video recording. See section 1.15, 'Guidance on using video evidence'.

Double-checking of the scoring of any standardised tests is required both raw scores and any derived scores. All working papers must be attached to the DAR (Diagnostic Assessment Report) when submitted for external verification.

Differential diagnosis and neurodiversity

Differential diagnosis is not always possible or indeed necessary in assessments. A discrepancy between ability and attainment is no longer the only requirement for a diagnosis. Neurodiversity focusses on discrepancies within cognitive processing skills.

Additional information (updated 2016)

For information on how to administer these qualifications please follow the link to OCR's Administration area, <http://www.ocr.org.uk/administration/>.