

Assessing Assessors

– A Guide for consistency across issuing bodies who evaluate Assessment Practising Certificates renewal applications

The APC renewal process offers an opportunity both for individual professional development through feedback on assessment reports and for issuing bodies to support the overall aim of the APC scheme to improve assessment practice standards. These criteria also apply where a report is required in the initial application for an Assessment Practising Certificate.

Renewal of an APC depends upon successful completion of a CPD log and production of an effective assessment report. Defining "effective" can be problematic and current guidance is very broad. We believe it is important that all bodies who undertake to review APC applications apply a consistent standard and adopt a consistent policy in their response. Therefore, we propose the following brief structure and feedback process as a framework for all issuing bodies to adopt.

Important Note: Underlying all these guidelines would be the experience and professionalism of those undertaking the reviews. Reviews must be holistic and consider the overall aim of the APC to approve high-quality assessment reports alongside offering positive support to professional colleagues.

The structure sets out the following:

- A description of the standard for all "effective" assessment reports.
- A hierarchical structure for analysis of errors / weaknesses
- A structured process for response / feedback

Effective assessment reports should demonstrate:

- understanding of the nature of SpLD
- understanding of affective issues in learners with SpLD
- ability to collect a range of evidence from a variety of sources
- understanding of theory and application of psychometric and educational testing
- ability to select appropriate assessment materials, administer tests correctly and interpret resulting data accurately
- ability to produce professional, accurate reports written in language easily accessible to non-specialists, with due regard to building a positive framework.
- ability to make recommendations directly linked to assessment findings and subjects needs
- understanding and application of current legal and professional issues, rules and regulations relating to SpLD

Structure for analysis of errors/weaknesses

Level	Area of professional practice	Response
Level 1 - areas of the report where absolute accuracy and reliability is required at all times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confidentiality maintained 100% accurate calculation, reporting and conversion of test scores Appropriate recording of standard scores, percentiles and confidence intervals Tests are age appropriate and evidence suggests they were conducted within standardisation guidelines Diagnosis / conclusion supported by evidence 	Any single error in this category to prompt immediate rejection of the report regardless of other features. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> one score inaccurate despite otherwise competent report. incorrect transcription of scores incorrect analysis
Level 2 - key areas of the report where very high degrees of reliability required. We would expect all reports to demonstrate these features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates understanding of the nature of SpLD - especially role of cognitive processing Links between ability and attainment made appropriately Correct interpretation of scores in relation to average Confidence intervals used to inform analysis Useful analysis of skills and strategies Appropriate for purpose Appropriate range of tests chosen Clear, jargon free writing - especially in summary and conclusion. Appropriate recommendations, clearly linked to assessment findings 	Anything beyond a very small number of errors at level 2 would require serious consideration for rejection. A significant weakness in only one area could prompt rejection. Feedback to be provided on identified weaknesses
Level 3 – areas where the key purpose and function of the report are not compromised but where improvement would be desirable.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accuracy of spelling, grammar etc Appropriate presentation and format, including relevant details to explain report features (test editions, explanation of scores etc) Accessibility of language 	Errors at level 3 would usually prompt recommendations for future practice but clearly, if the degree of the error were severe rejection would remain an option.

Although not necessarily demonstrated through the report evidence submitted, it is understood that for the assessment process the following have been incorporated in practice:

- test selection takes into consideration equal opportunity
- pre-testing requirements and conditions for assessment have been considered
- there are clear arrangements for feedback
- security and confidentiality of test materials and report are maintained
- practice is in accordance with the APC issuing body's code of ethics and standards of practice.

Process for response and feedback

Options following review of report submitted for evaluation

A. All criteria met	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• APC issued
B. Level 1 error identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feedback prepared• Second report requested*
C. A number of Level 2 errors identified (or serious degree of a single type of error)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feedback prepared• Second report requested*
D. Level 2 or 3 errors identified which do not undermine overall function of report	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feedback prepared• Applicants asked to sign and return copy of feedback to indicate they will incorporate feedback into future practice. Any supporting document the reviewer feels necessary can be requested.• On receipt APC issued.

* Second submitted report evaluated using same criteria. If this report also fails to meet the standard, and evidence of level 1 or 2 errors exists, the APC application is refused.

Response when APC application is refused

- Assessors to be removed from SASC website listing
- Assessors advised to undertake individual mentoring from an experienced colleague, or further training
- Assessors asked to provide evidence of mentoring or training before re-applying for APC
- Re-applications not be considered within 2 months