

Some things to look out for when submitting a report for APC renewal

A Diagnostic Assessment Report (DAR) submitted in support of the renewal of (or application for) an Assessment Practising Certificate (APC) is reviewed in accordance with the SpLD Assessment Standards Committee (SASC) guidance for the review of an APC.

Before submitting your chosen report, it would be useful to review it against the following check list of things to be aware of.

Confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove any details which mean that the reviewer could potentially identify the student including names, address, name of educational establishment etc. • Names can include learner/parent(s)/carer(s)/teaching staff etc. • Remember to check headers and footers and any labels on charts and tables.
100% accurate scoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double check all scores on your working papers. • Make sure the scores match across the report, e.g. in the body, summary table and any graphical representation of scores. • If providing a confidence interval (CI) for a subtest that uses scale scores, remember to convert to a standard score.
Test administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the test administration instructions exactly as given in the manual. • Make sure the descriptive passages within the report reflect the instructions in the manual without compromising test confidentiality.
Core components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include all the core components which are expected to feature in a diagnostic assessment report, as specified in current SASC guidance. • Don't forget phonological memory (now reported as part of working memory) and to include rapid naming tasks under the heading Speed of Processing.
Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay attention to the SASC report format and follow it closely. • Remember to refer to the SASC Additional Guidance and Explanatory Detail document. • Don't forget to check the SASC website for the latest updates to these documents.
Understanding the nature of SpLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure that test descriptions and analysis reflect what a test is actually designed to measure.
Unexpected differences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note unexpected differences between tests; use data provided in manuals to support your observations. • Be careful not to ascribe statistically significant differences to tests which are not co-normed.
Scores in relation to average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include a guide to level descriptors used within the report as per the current SASC report format. • Remember to describe standard scores consistently with reference to your guide.

Confidence intervals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can only be compared when tests have been co-normed. • Include for composite/index scores and stand-alone tests that do not contribute to an index, and diagnostically important subtest scores, when the manual provides CIs or SEms. • 95% level is recommended. • Provide a clear definition of CIs in the guide to the interpretation of scores.
Qualitative analysis and observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include relevant qualitative analysis of skills and strategies for all tests/subtests including for underlying ability. • Note how and why key elements of test performance contribute to cognitive and attainment profiles that do or do not lead to the subsequent identification of the learner with a specific learning difficulty.
Appropriate range of tests	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administer all core subtests of the CTOPP-2, all 5 subtests of the TOMAL-2 ACI. • Assess reading comprehension using continuous prose. • Match the free writing task to the age and level of study of the student. • Choose tests wisely and avoid over testing whilst making sure all core components are covered. • For a diagnostic report, check your test choices against the STEC test lists.
Sensitive and professional communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beware of including potentially sensitive and/or inappropriate information about the learner, their family or, for example, teaching staff. • Make sure to explain technical terms, abbreviations, acronyms and concepts on first use.
Appropriate recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure these are individualised. • When recommending Examination Access Arrangements (EAAs) clearly note the supporting evidence. • Make sure important ESSs are not overlooked.
Appropriate for purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the cover sheet accurately reflects that of the SASC report format. • Provide detailed background information (<i>be conversant with the updated SASC visual screening protocol</i>). • Calculate all composite scores. The exception might be the WRIT. • Remember that for tests where the student is above the ceiling age, scores and/or level descriptors are not appropriate: performance can only be described qualitatively.
Appropriate presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carefully proofread the report. • Report test/subtest names accurately as used in manual and state the edition. • Where parallel test forms are available state the test form used. • Contain the summary table to one page and include all subtest scores. • Remember the scale for a graph using standard scores cannot begin at zero. • Formally reference all tests used. Briefly describe each test and subtest and what they measure.
Relevant SpLD(s) definition(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only include the definition(s) which are relevant to the assessment and remember to keep within professional boundaries. • Ensure any definition used is current and referenced in Appendix 5. • Keep up to date with the latest SASC guidance regarding all SpLDs.