

Psycho-educational Assessments

Pupils are generally referred for an assessment when they are having difficulty in school. When pupils are failing to make the progress in basic attainments that we would hope for, there can be several possible relevant factors.

Often, more than one factor may be involved, and the pattern is rarely simple. However, a useful initial step is to explore the possibility of specific learning difficulties. That is, to examine a pupil's profile of thinking, learning and problem-solving skills with a view to determining whether there are any areas of specific difficulty which may be delaying the development of key skills. Test-scores are important in helping to identify profiles of ability and difficulty. They also give a good estimate of general learning abilities as expressed by Standard Scores (like IQ scores) and these can be compared with standard scores on tests of attainment: reading, spelling and number. The assessment will provide an I.Q. level and an indication of the child's intellectual profile.

Common academic issues that are raised by parents and school staff include:

- Lower than expected performance in a subject or specific area
- Weak reading, spelling, writing, reading comprehension or numeracy
- Discrepancy between oral and written expression
- Difficulty in remembering or recalling learned information
- Unexpectedly poor performance in tests despite good contribution in class and good revision
- Difficulty completing tests or timed tasks within the allotted time
- Problems with identifying important information when reading or revising
- Difficulty with revision or exam techniques
- Difficulty with planning and organizing projects
- Poor general organization skills
- Poor attention and concentration in class or at home
- Problems with social skills
- Early language developmental difficulties

An assessment for a child face-to-face may take two to two and a half hours, including time made available to the parents for discussion and initial feedback on the assessment results. A detailed family history is obtained and a form for schools to complete is also provided. The assessment content and time varies depending upon the age and ability of the child, and the nature of the requests of the parents.

The Intelligence tests (WISC IV) assesses the pupil's general intelligence, and the subtests that comprise the scale do not require the use of literacy skills. This test provides a means of assessing a pupil's development in various areas of thinking skills in relation to their peer group, such as the ability to process verbal information (particularly on the Verbal Comprehension subtests), and nonverbal information (particularly on the Perceptual Reasoning subtests). In addition, memory and processing speeds are measured.

Educational testing involves the use of formal tests. These are often described as "norm-referenced" tests, meaning that the tests have been standardised so that pupils are evaluated in a similar way. A norm-referenced test of a pupil's reading abilities, for example, may compare the child to other children of similar age or grade level. These tests have been developed and evaluated by researchers and proven to be effective for measuring a particular trait.

Psychological assessments are not like school tests that you either pass or fail. There is NO pass or fail. Rather, psychologists use information from the various tests and assessments to reach a specific diagnosis and develop a treatment plan.

The Full assessment will cover the following main areas:

- Intellectual or cognitive assessment: this part will provide information on the general ability, thinking style and the cognitive strengths and weaknesses of the child.
- Educational: this part provides information on the level of the reading, writing, spelling and numeracy and compared with the peer group level. Speeds of reading, writing and calculations will also be assessed.
- Additional information: This part includes assessments of attention and concentration, phonological awareness and processing, sequencing, working memory, phonological fluency *and retrieval, and visio-spatial skills.*
- Emotional: some elements of the child's social and emotional aspects will be investigated, such as anxiety, self-esteem, self-confidence, social perception. It is important to understand that some emotional issues can underlie many academic difficulties

Following the assessment, a detailed written report will be provided within two weeks. The reports will provide the results of the main findings and will outline the recommendations for actions that will help the pupil in the most appropriate way.

ASK Independent Educational Assessments Services

Fees and Descriptions

Managing and coping with complex learning difficulties can often leave individuals and families feeling isolated and confused. We, therefore, believe that the psycho-educational assessments provide individuals and caretakers with robust tools, knowledge and information, and feel more empowered to make the necessary changes in their environment and school. Armed with identified strengths and weaknesses, and diagnosis, we believe that the clients will gain a sense of hope and relief about future actions and possibilities for themselves and their children.

The cost for a psycho-educational assessment varies as a function of the type of the assessment required. The assessment will include numerous components such as formal standardized tests, norm-referenced tests, informal tests, information obtained from questionnaires completed by family and school, interviews and observational data. The psychologist determines what information to use based on the specific requests being asked. All tests used are up to date. Below is the outline of the costs of various assessments:

Standard Comprehensive Assessment – CHF 900

This assessment will include the core subtests of the cognitive test (intelligence level), and all literacy and numeracy measures. Phonological processing, memory and processing speeds will also be covered. The assessment will last for about two hours and will include consultation with parents to provide initial feedback, and a full comprehensive report.

Review Assessment – CHF 700

This assessment will cover re-testing of various areas measured in a full psychological assessment carried out in less than two years prior. The aim is to measure the progress of the child. The assessment must be carried out by the same psychologist that conducted the initial assessment. The session will last for about one and a half hours and will include consultation of initial feedback to parents and a report outlining the findings.

Assessments for mature students and adults – CHF 900

This assessment is usually sought to establish the nature of an individual's difficulties and to provide advice on future actions. It includes a full cognitive assessment (intelligence test), additional phonological, memory and processing tests, and basic attainment tests. A consultation session for initial feedback on the assessment and a full written report is included. The assessment lasts for about two hours. The report can be used for students entering Higher Education.

Computerized ADHD evaluation – CHF 150

This is a computerized evaluation of levels of Attention, Impulsivity, Hyperactivity and response Timing. It could be added to any of the above assessments for an additional charge (though it is included in the Full comprehensive and in-depth assessment). The aim is to further investigate ADHD when there is a cause of concern for such a difficulty. (If the evaluation is required as an addition to previous assessment, not part of the current assessment, then the fee will be CHF 175).

Full, comprehensive and in-depth assessment - CHF 1550

This assessment will include a full cognitive test (intelligence level), all literacy and numeracy skills, phonological processing, memory and processing speeds, and will further investigate specific areas of need as observed by the profile. The socio-emotive aspect of learning will also be covered (such as anxiety level, self-esteem and confidence, social skills, possible depression and other issues that may affect learning). To this assessment, a computerized test to measure levels of Attention, Impulsivity, Hyperactivity and reaction Timing will be added. The assessment will last for about three hours and will include initial feedback to parents and a full comprehensive written report of about 20 pages.

The report will be e-mailed to the parents directly within two to three weeks. ASK is not responsible for the late report. Dr. Gilda Palti also conduct assessments for adults, college and university student.