

Common pitfalls when applying for renewal

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Level 1 errors

Mistakes when calculating scores

- If these are one or two minor errors then all issuing bodies have agreed that we can point out the error(s)
- Applicant will return the same corrected report and will be awarded a renewal
- If they are high in number, or impactful on the report then this means the application will not be passed
- Solution is to double (triple) check your scores

Level 1 errors

- These are nearly always:
- Confidence interval errors
 - Simple check at the end that they look right (score lies approximately in the middle of the two intervals)
- Errors in text compared with table
 - Possibly due to changes made while writing the report

Composite scores

- Report composite scores for TOMAL 2, CTOPP 2 and TOWRE 2 regardless of discrepancies
 - Evaluate discrepancies within composites
 - Frequent and important ones include:
 - Differences between Manual Imitation and other ACI subtests
 - Differences between the two TOWRE 2 subtests
 - Differences between the three Phonological awareness tasks

Composite scores in WRIT

- Only for WRIT is it required that you do not report composite scores where there are discrepancies:
- No need to compare each subtest with each other subtest
 - This violates probability assumptions
- Comparison of the two subtests within each composite
- Comparison of the two composite scores
- Where there are discrepancies do not report the corresponding composite score or the general ability score

An example

- Scores for 18 year old
 - Vocabulary: 83
 - Analogies: 100
 - Matrices: 102
 - Diamonds: 110
- The two verbal sub-scores look discrepant
 - Check differences greater than 9
- Use the tables provided in the manual to verify

Table 6.6. Differences Between Individual Subtests Required for Statistical Significance

PRESCHOOL SCHOOL-AGED STUDENTS: 4-5 YEARS				
	VOCABULARY	VERBAL ANALOGIES	DIAMONDS	MATRICES
VOCABULARY	*****	15	12	14
VERBAL ANALOGIES	20	*****	14	16
DIAMONDS	19	18	*****	12
MATRICES	16	20	16	*****
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL-AGED STUDENTS: 6-12 YEARS				
	VOCABULARY	VERBAL ANALOGIES	DIAMONDS	MATRICES
VOCABULARY	*****	15	14	12
VERBAL ANALOGIES	20	*****	17	14
DIAMONDS	19	22	*****	14
MATRICES	15	19	18	*****
SECONDARY SCHOOL-AGED STUDENTS: 13-18 YEARS				
	VOCABULARY	VERBAL ANALOGIES	DIAMONDS	MATRICES
VOCABULARY	*****	17	13	15
VERBAL ANALOGIES	23	*****	17	18
DIAMONDS	18	23	*****	15
MATRICES	20	24	19	*****
ADULT: AGES 19 YEARS & UP				
	VOCABULARY	VERBAL ANALOGIES	DIAMONDS	MATRICES
VOCABULARY	*****	14	12	11
VERBAL ANALOGIES	19	*****	15	15
DIAMONDS	15	20	*****	12
MATRICES	15	19	16	*****
AVERAGE ¹				
	VOCABULARY	VERBAL ANALOGIES	DIAMONDS	MATRICES
VOCABULARY	*****	15	12	13
VERBAL ANALOGIES	19	*****	14	15
DIAMONDS	15	19	*****	12
MATRICES	17	20	16	*****

Differences in the two composite scores in WRIT

Table 6.3. Differences Necessary Between Verbal_(Crystallized) and Visual_(Fluid) IQs to Reach Statistical Significance

AGE	LEVEL OF STATISTICAL SIGNIFICANCE	VERBAL _(CRYSTALLIZED) / VISUAL _(FLUID)
Preschool 4–5 Years	.05	13
	.01	17
Elementary School 6–12 Years	.05	11
	.01	15
Secondary School 13–18 Years	.05	13
	.01	17
Adult 19 Years & Up	.05	9
	.01	12
Average ¹	.05	11
	.01	14

- It might be that subtests within composite scores are similar but composite scores themselves are not
- Check with this table in manual

Looking for discrepancies

- Report and interpret meaningful discrepancies:
- for example between reading and comprehension
 - Even if they are from different measures
- Evaluate whether scores are similar:
 - reading and phonological awareness
- If the manual provides a formal table of discrepancies, use this
- If not, then use confidence interval overlaps
- Change language accordingly
 - Table in manual shows significant differences
 - Lack of overlap in confidence intervals shows marked differences

Summary versus conclusion

The summary

- key part of the report
- May be the only part that is read
- Provides a complete (within reason) but succinct outline of all information concerning learner including conclusion

The conclusion

- is the result of your considerations
- Precede with a definition
- Underpin with evidence from the report

Summary

Make sure this includes all crucial information

Should include:

- Outline of learner's profile
- Statement of SpLD/Dyslexia
- Summary of evidence for SpLD to underpin statement
- Effect of SpLD on literacy and study skills
- Compensatory strengths
- Other relevant conclusions

Conclusion

- Begin with a definition to help you form an accurate conclusion about your learner
- A common reason for reports not passing is that the evidence does not fit with the conclusion
- A definition will help you as you will have to match your evidence against the definition

An example

Dyslexia can be defined as:

‘a learning difficulty that primarily affects the skills involved in accurate and fluent word reading and spelling. Characteristic features of dyslexia are difficulties in phonological awareness, verbal memory and verbal processing speed. Dyslexia occurs across the range of intellectual abilities. It is best thought of as a continuum not a distinct category, and there are no clear cut-off points.’ *Jim Rose 2008*

The evidence presented here and based upon the definition above confirms that B has dyslexia, as he demonstrates underlying difficulties in

Summaries for each section

- Including summaries for each section helps you consolidate your thoughts about the learner and helps the reader too
- Double check you have included crucial information about the skill set in your summary

Example of section summary

S's spelling skills are well below average. They are in line with his other literacy skills and may deteriorate when he is under pressure to compose. He struggles to spell phonetically regular words and when writing prose, only high frequency words were spelt correctly and these were used several times. These observations suggest that he has difficulty translating sounds to words and that his phonological skills are not strong. When writing, S takes time to compose his own work and additionally, his copying speed is also slow as he pauses frequently between letters.

Qualitative Information

- Quite often, applicants provide qualitative information about some aspects of performance but not consistently
- The most common section where this is omitted is for underlying ability

Qualitative information

In this test J was asked to give brief oral definitions for a sequence of orally presented words. This tests verbal knowledge and expressive vocabulary. His score can be described as well below average but this was largely because he was often unable to provide the crucial part of the meaning. His responses were however highly creative and emotional in nature and suggested that he knew the meaning but was unable to express the answer accurately. When explaining what a type of insect was, he stated only that 'he hated them'; he used appropriate root words with incorrect suffixes, for example, describing a fierce animal as 'biteable' and he used actions instead of words for some verbs.

Description of test

- This only needs to be written once as it can be used for each report so make sure it is perfect the first time and use the same text each time
- Make it concise but make sure all details are included
 - What are you measuring?
 - how are you doing this?

The WRAT 4 Single Word Reading test requires the individual to read out loud single words of increasing difficulty with 10 seconds allowed for each word.

Using the right tests

- SASC provide a list of tests that are considered acceptable
- General advice is to abide by this list **however, SASC states**
‘That does not preclude approved assessors from using alternative tests on occasions where these are deemed necessary, **but in such cases a justification for their use should be provided in the report.**’
- If you are testing someone with English as an additional language you may need to use other tests
- It is always good to communicate information in a report about anything you feel might be misinterpreted

SASC website

www.sasc.org.uk

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What is SASC?
SpLD Assessment Standards Committee
The SpLD Assessment Standards Committee [SASC] wishes to encourage a spirit of cooperation and help to forge links with a range of institutions to support and embed good practice. SASC aims to support and advance standards in SpLD assessment.

Page Links

- » [SpLD 2005 Working Group Guidelines](#)
- » [Common associated characteristics - dyspraxia](#)
- » [Dyspraxia Guidance - Sept 2013](#)
- » [Advice on disability evidence for students with Autism.](#)
- » [Diagnostic Assessment Report Proforma -Rev Oct 2015](#)
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Headlines 

Update: Using DASH free writing subtest

- The DASH battery of tasks is a means of testing speed of handwriting rather than composition
- If a report is being prepared for DSA purposes, universities are requesting 15 minutes of writing on a topic related to study
- This may mean that you cannot use the DASH composite score
- This means it is a good idea to know how to report confidence intervals for subtests

Any questions?