

## **Cognitive assessments**

### **What are they for?**

A cognitive assessment gives a profile of an individual's strengths and difficulties in relation to their learning, as it can provide a snapshot of how they are doing at that time in a controlled way.

Cognitive abilities tend to remain stable throughout an individual's childhood and adult life so it is possible to use it as a predictor of an individual's academic potential.

### **Who is suitable for a cognitive assessment?**

Cognitive assessments are generally suitable for children and young people between ages 4 and 60 years old. An individual does not need to have high language abilities to receive a cognitive assessment. Individuals who experience any of the following difficulties could benefit from a cognitive assessment:

- language
- reading and/or writing
- mathematics
- memory
- processing information
- attention and/or concentration
- academic life

Assessment can also be useful where there are areas of high ability.

### **What are the benefits of a cognitive assessment?**

Cognitive assessments bring many benefits, including:

- Providing a learning profile, including strengths and difficulties
- Identifying a learning need (including dyslexia and dyscalculia)
- Being able to compare to a standardised sample
- Helping to identify able and talented
- Guiding personalised learning
- Providing evidence to support a specific application
- Supporting access arrangements
- Being evidence-based
- Being a robust and comprehensive assessment

- Helping to distinguish between special educational needs and English as an additional language

Following a cognitive assessment there will be some recommendations for supporting the individual's learning environment.

### **What happens prior to a cognitive assessment?**

A cognitive assessment can be carried out following an initial discussion, or can be something that is recommended as part of an intervention or extended assessment.

### **What happens during a cognitive assessment?**

A cognitive assessment takes place within a school, home, community setting or within our clinic. The assessment would need to be in a quiet room free from distractions. Ideal conditions for a cognitive assessment would be in a place the child or young person knows well and feels relaxed in so they are able to be calm and focused. There are variations between each cognitive assessment, but they all measure a multitude of abilities through puzzles, activities and questions. Cognitive assessments can be long, so usually a break will take place.

### **Which cognitive assessments do we use?**

The specific cognitive assessment(s) used will be chosen based on the individual. The main cognitive assessments we use are:

- WAIS - Wechsler adult intelligence scale can measure; reasoning, retention of information, processing information, organisation of information, verbal comprehension
- WISC-V - Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children can be used to provide a full cognitive profile of strengths and difficulties, including; verbal comprehension, visual spatial, fluid reasoning, working memory, processing speed, quantitative reasoning, auditory working memory, non-verbal, general ability and cognitive proficiency
- WIAT-III – Wechsler Individual Achievement Test is used to provide the most reliable and comprehensive assessment of reading, language and numerical attainment. It measures oral language, reading skills, reading comprehension and fluency, written expression, mathematics, maths fluency and achievement.

There are other cognitive assessments and ways to assess cognitive abilities and these will be discussed before the assessment takes place.

### **What happens after a cognitive assessment?**

After a cognitive assessment we will have a comprehensive idea of a child or young person's needs and how to reach their true potential. Following a cognitive assessment it may be suggested that we carry out further assessment, an intervention or recommendations. Results from a cognitive assessment will be provided through a written report, with the option of a feedback session afterwards.

**How much do cognitive assessments cost?**

Cognitive assessments costs start at £550 for a WISC or WAIS and there is an additional cost for additional tests if required.