

The Dyslexia Guild Code of Practice

This code is designed to cover the circumstances of specialist teachers and assessors providing assessment services and reports to clients. It is written with particular relevance to the assessment of dyslexia and specific learning difficulties, but is not limited to assessments of these kinds. It is not intended to replace more general codes of ethics to which those employed in the fields of education, guidance and training may be subject. Dyslexia Guild members and practitioners agree to abide by this code.

General Principles

Practitioners should:

Practice within the boundaries of their competence.

1. Avoid claims for expertise that are potentially misleading.
2. Recognise the limits of their expertise and of the methods used, and seek advice from others when faced with issues which are at the limits of their professional expertise
3. Give professional, balanced advice that is not guided by financial interest.
4. Respect individual and cultural differences amongst their clients and take steps to avoid discrimination and promote equality of access to services offered.
5. Respect clients' rights to confidentiality and take all reasonable steps to ensure their personal safety.
6. Have regard to the requirements of the recipients of assessment reports and conform to current standards and recommendations from relevant professional organisations, including the Dyslexia Guild.
7. Conform to the Guild's policies regarding Continuing Professional Development, keeping up to date with scientific, ethical, and legal developments relating to their professional activities.
8. Keep up-to-date with developments in regulations, test materials and procedures and ensure that their practice conforms to contemporary

standards.

9. Respect the copyright of published materials.
10. Conduct themselves in a professional manner and avoid behaviour that might bring the profession and/or the Dyslexia Guild into disrepute.
11. Respond to complaints and take appropriate action quickly.
(For example correcting any errors in assessment reports, or, when appropriate, offering a reassessment or returning any fee).
12. Co-operate with any investigation into a breach of this code and accept the findings of the Dyslexia Guild Board, which may include the withholding of an Assessment Practising Certificate and the publication of the findings of the investigation.

When Providing Assessment Services

Practitioners should:

13. Be honest and accurate in advertising their professional services and avoid ambiguous statements or claims that might be misleading to the public.
14. Provide services in appropriate settings, using materials and equipment that are fit for purpose.
15. Ensure that, as far as possible, clients are informed of the purposes and consequences of an assessment, or of other services offered.
16. Seek to obtain the informed consent of all clients to whom services are offered.
17. Have particular regard to the unequal power relationship of an assessment situation and take all reasonable measures to ensure that the client does not feel pressured or coerced into taking part in something against their will.

When Charging Fees for Assessment Services

Practitioners should:

18. Ensure that there is clarity, particularly in relation to consent and the disclosure of findings, in situations where several parties are involved in the commissioning of assessment services. (Examples here are: client-school-parent; client-examination body.)
19. When relevant, ensure that clients are aware as soon as possible of any costs that may be involved in the provision of services.
20. Be open about any financial interest in any goods and services which may be recommended.

In Providing Assessment Reports

Practitioners should:

21. Report their findings and professional conclusions accurately and honestly, resisting pressure to make statements or recommendations, even when under pressure to do so, which are not supported by the assessment data.
22. Express conclusions taking due regard of the full circumstances of the assessment and all relevant contextual and situational factors.
23. Avoid judgments that are based on hearsay, uncorroborated evidence and subjective opinion.
24. Remain within the parameters of established conventions of decision-making, when necessary checking on these conventions through discussions with colleagues.
25. Be aware of the potential limitations of the methods used and express conclusions and recommendations with due caution.
26. Not normally recommend only one course of action, but make the client aware of a range of recommended options from which the client may choose.

27. Acknowledge, and provide references to, any information, recommendations and other materials mentioned in a report, that are derived from the work of other individuals or organisations.

28. Keep full records of :

- Details of referrals and the nature of the instructions
- The evidence of seeking informed consent
- The working papers and data obtained from the assessment for a period of not less than two years
- The report of the assessment for a period of not less than five years

With regard to Confidentiality

Practitioners should:

29. Avoid forming relationships that may impair professional objectivity or otherwise lead to exploitation of, or conflicts of interest with, a client.

30. Maintain the confidentiality of assessment records and take steps to avoid inadvertent disclosure during the processing of assessment information.

31. Only disclose confidential information with the consent of clients or their authorised representatives, unless compelled to divulge information by a Court of Law.

32. Restrict the circulation of reports to those authorised by the client, or their representative(s).

33. Take steps to limit the use of reports to the purposes for which it was produced.

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