Ministry of Defence

JSP 822
Defence Direction and Guidance for Training and Education

Volume 7: Specific Learning Differences

Preface

How to use this Volume

1.   JSP 822, Volume 7 sets out Defence Policy Direction and Guidance on Specific Learning Differences [1] . The volume contains the majority of Defence Learning and Development policies for Specific Learning Differences; where Defence policy sits outside of Volume 7, it is clearly referenced throughout the volume, and in the Coherence section at Para 5 of Volume 1.

2.   The volume is made up of Direction and Guidance:

a. **Policy Directives** which provides the Direction that must be followed in accordance with statute or policy mandated by Defence or on Defence by Central Government.

b. **Policy Guidance** which provides the Guidance and best practice that will assist the user to comply with the Directives.

3.   The volume employs '**must**', '**should**' and '**could**' language as follows:

a.   **Must**: indicates that the policy direction is a legal or key policy requirement and is **mandatory**.

b.   b. **Should**: indicates the policy guidance is a **recommendation**. Although not compulsory, if a decision is made that any part of this policy cannot be complied with, then the Senior Responsible Owner who is ultimately responsible for that decision must thereby own and manage the inherent risks that arises.

c.   c. **Could**: indicates that the policy guidance is good practice and encouraged.

4.   JSP 822 is the authoritative policy that directs and guides Defence people to ensure that training in Defence is appropriate, efficient, effective and, most importantly, safe. Organisations across Defence have their own policy documents which local policy teams populate and manage, based on their interpretation of the policy contained within JSP 822.

Users should consult those policies and policy teams, within their organisation prior to JSP 822 and the TSLD Training Policy Team that manages JSP 822.

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[1] Note that Organisational Learning is captured under the Defence Organisational Learning Structure (DOLS) Framework owned by Joint Warfare in STRATCOM and is not within the scope of JSP 822. The Pan Defence Skills Framework (PDSF) currently sits in Ch 4 of JSP 755

Contents

1 The Defence Learning Framework (DLF)

1. The DLF develops the Defence People Strategy's direction to maximise the talent of Defence People, providing a high-level framework encompassing the span of Defence individual and collective learning. The DLF provides key principles across ten component areas, covering all aspects of the Defence Learning Ecosystem. Detailed information on the DLF can be found in Volume 1.

Vision: Defence enables Joint Operational excellence through high quality learning that maximises the use of all the talent available to Defence.									
Mission: To enable the competent, efficient and effective delivery of UK Defence Strategic Objectives by FE@R through the provision of high quality, timely and relevant learning to Defence People.									
Key Components of Defence Learning									
Learning Governance: Effective governance structures exist with defined responsibilities and robust H2A mechanisms.	**Learning Design:** The DSAT QMS and DSAT policy and processes are applied effectively to all Defence Learning.	**Learning Delivery:** Modern, flexible learning delivery methods are employed to meet Defence and learner needs.	**Learning Environment:** Modern learning environments and technologies engage the learner in achieving high quality learning outcomes.	**Learning Culture:** A positive, proactive approach to Through Life Development (TLD) pan-Defence is embedded across the workforce	**Individual Skills Development (Professional):** Identification, acquisition and recording of Defence Professional Skills is enabled & embedded pan-Defence.	**Individual Skills Development (Personal):** Defence people are encouraged and enabled to attain personal Skills that maximise their talent (KSE-B)	**Collective Skills Development:** Deliberate and targeted learning occurs that develops team effectiveness and operational capability.	**Partnerships:** Strong strategic, operational and tactical partnerships are nurtured to maximise Defence Learning outcomes and benefits.	**Learning Futures:** Research, experimentation and innovation drives continuous improvement in Defence Learning.
Principles of Defence Learning									
1. Effective structures and responsibilities are implemented. 2. Functional and Capability Sponsors are involved from the outset. 3. Learning Requirements are clearly articulated. 4. Continuous improvement is driven across Defence Learning. 5. Risk is managed, and resource prioritised to maximise Defence Learning outcomes. 6. Robust H2A mechanisms provide assurance at all levels of Defence Learning.	1. Learning meets documented requirements and supports the attainment of Skills. 2. DSAT Analysis, Design & Evaluation functions are implemented. 3. Design staff have the necessary Skills to maximise the efficacy of learning interventions. 4. Interventions are modularised by default and access maximised. 5. Existing content is reused / repurposed to reduce duplication and maximise usage. 6. Capability development addresses the Training DLoD coherently and in a timely manner	1. Evidence-based methods are employed to achieve learning outcomes. 2. Experiential Learning is integrated into the workplace. 3. A Blended Learning approach is adopted wherever relevant. 4. Learning diagnostics are employed to establish WF Skills and enable a "fixed mastery, variable time" approach. 5. Delivery staff have the necessary Skills to support learners to achieve enhanced learning outcomes. 6. Learners have the necessary learning and technology Skills to achieve enhanced learning outcomes.	1. Physical and virtual learning environments are safe, engaging and accessible high-quality places. 2. Learning technology capabilities are developed iteratively in an 'evergreen' approach. 3. A pan-Defence Learning Management and Delivery System: a. Provides coherent Information to enable evidence-based investment and policy decisions. b. Enables coherent and efficient Governance, Design, Delivery, Assessment and Evaluation. c. Enables immersive learning.	1. Positive attitudes to learning are demonstrated at all levels of Defence. 2. WF have the opportunity and support to undertake purposeful learning. 3. Learning achievement is rewarded and recognised. 4. Informal learning opportunities are encouraged, supported and exploited. 5. Duty of care and trainee welfare is prioritised in all learning environments. 6. Learning design & delivery account for the learning needs of a neuro-diverse workforce.	1. WF Skills are captured and recorded in a single pan-Defence repository. 2. Defence Skills records are utilised to: a. Exploit workforce talents to meet Defence Strategic Objectives. b. Enable professional development and career progression. 3. Professional Skills Development is based on clear learning outcomes and recognition of accredited / prior qualifications & learning.	1. A personalised learning pathway, a Skills Passport, and coaching and mentoring provision is available for all. 2. Individuals 'own' and 'value' their personal learning journey, supported with access to learning, qualifications, time and resources. 3. Individuals are encouraged to develop Skills and gain qualifications to prepare them for life beyond Defence.	1. Collective Training is focussed on the development of teamwork capabilities. 2. Methods and tools are used to accurately measure and assess teamwork capabilities and skills. 3. Identify, measure and evaluate collective team & task outcomes at all levels. 4. A full mix of Live, Synthetic and Blended methods are used to provide Collective Training interventions.	1. Collaboration with PAGs, UK Defence Allies and external organisations is harnessed to improve learning outcomes for the benefit of Defence. 2. Collaboration with DfE influences Government learning policy for the benefit of Defence and its WF. 3. Collaboration with partner organisations enables the delivery of apprenticeships, professional accreditation and intellectual development programmes. 4. Outsourced Defence Learning contracts are managed and assured effectively.	1. Lesson exploitation and horizon scanning identifies opportunities and priorities for learning research. 2. Research work in partnership with DST, DSTL and contracted partners is: a. based on agreed requirements; b. supported and exploited into practice. 3. Opportunities to experiment and innovate are created, and outcomes are transferred into BaU where appropriate.

2 Defence Direction for Specific Learning Differences

Policy Sponsor: TESRR, CDP

Specific Learning Differences (SpLD) is a term that is used to describe a range of learning differences that are inherent to an individual and which have the potential, to varying degrees, to impact on an individual's ability to undertake learning and complete tasks within the workplace. Those personnel who may have a SpLD, as part of the wider neurodiversity piece, may bring unique and valuable strengths to their work[2], which should be harnessed and embraced by any organisation.

SpLDs (Specific Learning Differences), which include Dyslexia, Dyspraxia and Dyscalculia, sit under the neurodiversity umbrella and are part of a wider spectrum of neurodiverse conditions. The term neurodiversity[3] describes the range of differences in individual brain function and behavioural traits, regarded as part of normal variation in the human population.

SpLDs are not always easy to identify and are sometimes interpreted as poor Skills for Life[4]. A SpLD can impact on an individual's: organisation; sequencing; memory; auditory and/or visual perception; spoken language; motor skills; and time management. The earlier SpLD are identified the better the support that can be provided, with through career 'Learning Support' as the focus rather than 'testing/diagnosis/tracking.' SP need not be screened for SpLD during the recruitment process, nor is there a requirement to test during initial training (although there is no limitation where single Service (sS) see a benefit). Differences relating to SpLD can manifest at any stage during a career. It is likely SpLD will become apparent at key career change points such as promotion exams or during periods of stress.

The Defence Direction contained within this volume, seeks to ensure that SpLD is principally and proactively managed by the individual, supported where possible by their sS and not a condition that should draw undue attention, impractical or unmanageable special measures. SpLD is a naturally occurring difference to learning that, through targeted support and the implementation of coping strategies, can be successfully mitigated.

2.1 Introduction

SCOPE

1.   This Defence Direction is the SpLD policy for Service Personnel (SP) only. It provides a Learning Support framework for those identified with a SpLD. Reservists should be offered support for their SpLD in the following circumstances (when they are subject to Service Law)[5]:

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[2] Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development 'Neurodiversity at Work Guide' dated February 2018.
[3] Oxford Dictionary 2019 definition.
[4] As per the Scottish Qualifications Authority Skills Framework - Skills for Life are Literacy, Numeracy, Health and Wellbeing, Employability, Enterprise and Citizenship and Thinking Skills.
[5] An analogy can reasonably be drawn when Reservists are subject to Service law (see JSP 830 MSL Version 2.0 Ch 3 para 11).

a.   During permanent Service on call-out (either by virtue of the statutory requirement under the Reserve Forces Act 1980 or the Reserve Forces Act 1996 or any other call-out obligation of an officer).

b.   During home defence Service on call-out

c.   When engaged in a full-time Service commitment.

d.   When undertaking any duty or training (whether in pursuance of an obligation). This includes any additional duties commitment undertaken.

e.   When serving on the permanent staff of a reserve force.

Outside of these circumstances, the onus is on the Reservist to identify support or obtain it from their civilian employer. Ministry of Defence (MOD) Civil Servants and contractors are outside the scope of this policy. Civil Servants with SpLD are to refer to the contents of the Disability Toolkit[6].

AIM

2.   To ensure that SP with SpLD are provided with support appropriate to their needs, where feasible within Service and resource constraints. This support should be provided if it does not detrimentally affect others, erode mandated training standards, or threaten operational effectiveness. Such support is to be consistent with this policy and individuals may access support for their SpLD at any career stage, whether during initial training or in productive Service.

PRINCIPLES

3.   The Defence principles for SpLD are:

a.   The Armed Forces are exempt from the work provisions relating to protection against disability discrimination in the Equality Act 2010.[7]

b.   SpLDs are not in themselves a bar to recruitment or Service in the Armed Forces if the required standards are met. Individuals who fail to achieve or maintain the standards required for Service, despite feasible support, may be moved to a more suitable role or discharged from the Service.

c.   SpLDs are recognised as part of a wider spectrum of neurodivergent differences. The Armed Forces can provide screening and assessments for Dyslexia, Dyspraxia[8] and Dyscalculia only. However, regarding Visual stresses, following screening in accordance with "A Guide for Assessors and SpLD Practitioners"[9], dependent on the results[10] of any required referral to an optometrist, appropriate support should be offered based on any subsequent recommendations, such as the provision of coloured overlays/filters. Screening or assessment, including support, for all other neurodiversity

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[6] A link to the Civilian Disability Toolkit can be found here.
[7] EA10 Schedule 9 Work Exceptions, Part 1 paragraph 4(3).
[8] Also referred to as Developmental Co-ordination Disorder (DCD).
[9] Specialist guidance on screening and subsequent referral, if necessary, for Visual Difficulties can be found at the link here: SASC Working Group 2018 - SpLD and Visual Difficulties. Screening Protocol Jun 19: link.
[10] If the outcome of the referral requires medical intervention, then the Service Person is to seek support or treatment from the Medical Services accordingly.

issues are outside of the scope of this Direction and may require clinical or psychological diagnosis[11].

d.   Support may include specialist advice, guidance, and other adjustments, whether occupational or otherwise where feasible. It must be within Service and resource constraints if such support does not detrimentally affect others, erode mandated training standards, or threaten operational effectiveness.

e.   Training objectives, Role Performance Statements and the Competency Framework are not to be varied to allow an individual with a SpLD to complete a training event.

f.   Management of a SpLD is an individual's responsibility but Defence may help through appropriate and feasible support, which should be supported by the Chain of Command.

g.   Funding for specialist assessment may be provided (refer to paragraph 11e).

h.   When undertaking elective learning, individuals may use Enhanced Learning Credits (ELC) or Standard Learning Credits (SLC)[12] for additional personal support, or to provide specialist software or equipment specifically to help develop workplace coping strategies.

APPROACH

4.   Single Services and Strategic Command should ensure that they maintain appropriately trained, qualified, and placed SpLD Advisors throughout their Commands, who can provide Learning Support specific to SP with SpLD. The level of SpLD qualification Advisors should hold is to be in line with that recommended by the SpLD Assessment Standards Committee (SASC), British Dyslexia Association (BDA) and the Professional Association of Teachers of Students with Specific Learning Difficulties (PATOSS). Detailed below are the levels of qualification SpLD Advisors must hold depending on the role they are performing:

a.   **Screening, Classroom and Trainer Support:** Should currently hold, or be working towards gaining a Level 4 SpLD qualification.

b.   **For Specialist One to One Support:** SpLD Level 5 (current Approved Teacher Status (ATS)/Teaching Practicing Certificate (TPC)).

c.   **For the Assessment, diagnosis, and One to One Support** SpLD Level 7 (current Approved Teacher Status (ATS), Teaching Practicing Certificate (TPC), Assessment Practising Certificate (APC) or be a qualified Educational/Occupational Psychologist).

d.   **For Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Form 8 Access Arrangements** Level 7 Assessment Practising Certificate (APC) status.

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[11] JSP 950 Medical Policy.
[12] JSP 822 Volume 9 Chapter 1 (SLC) and Chapter 2 (ELC) refer. Support can include Formal External Assessment by an Educational or Occupational Psychologist, Specialist Tuition, Assisted Technology (Software) and training designed to assist SP with SpLD. Note this **excludes** tints/lenses for use by SP.

5.   The responsibility for managing SpLD, once it has identified, lies with the SP. Where the SP has SpLD that impacts on their work, training, or requires Defence involvement they are advised to make their line manager, trainer, or commander aware so that appropriate support may be either signposted or provided. Where the line manager, trainer, or commander suspects that a SP is displaying signs of a SpLD, they should engage with the SP to jointly identify the most appropriate type of support or intervention, if that is what is necessary, working closely with the SpLD Advisor.

RESPONSIBILITIES

6.   The responsibilities that rest with the individual, as well as Defence are outlined below. Learning Support provision should be co-ordinated by and through the sS SpLD Advisor.

7.   **Defence**. The MOD, through the SCs should ensure that SP with SpLD needs should, where practicable and subject to this Direction, be met. SP with SpLD have already passed the required minimum standards to enter Service, meaning that SpLD should, in most cases, not prevent a SP from participating fully in training or fulfilling productive Service. However, where flexibility exists, and resources allow the needs of SP with SpLD may be accommodated, provided there is no detriment to others, or to the mandated training standards or operational effectiveness. The Specialist Report or Individual Learning Plan (ILP)[13] agreed should take into consideration the practical implications of meeting these needs in a training or work environment. All SP should be made aware of their SpLD Advisor so that informal advice may be sought when required.

8.   **Single Services (sS)** should:

   a.   ensure that there are suitably trained, qualified, and placed SpLD Advisors throughout the SCs. Including making provision for ongoing SpLD Advisor training and Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

   b.   ensure that the Chain of Command, including trainers are, suitably educated as to the nature of SpLD and emphasise the necessity to take appropriate action early but sensitively when a SP displays signs of a learning difficulty / difference.

   c.   treat all records with care, obtaining a MOD Consent to Share SpLD Information and Data form when required, marking up any documentation as OFFICIAL SENSITIVE – PERSONAL[14] (refer to the requirements at paragraph 16).

   d.   fund appropriate and feasible support for the SP, as well as making changes to the working or training environment, which may also need external support, such as assessments by a Specialist Teacher or Psychologist. Advise the SP on what funding support they may expect.

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[13] Broadly defined as a formalised plan that is put in place by the SpLD Advisor, often with Educational or Occupational Psychologist, after formal diagnosis.
[14] MOD Privacy notice: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ministry-of-defence-privacy-notice/mod-privacy-notice.

9. **Chain of Command** should:

a. make all SP under command aware of their SpLD Advisor.

b. monitor the development of any tailored support initiative or ILP and should provide such support that is appropriate and within resource constraints. Should ensure that any work or training-based changes to support a SP do not detrimentally affect others, erode mandated training standards, or threaten operational effectiveness.

c. instil a culture of wider understanding, awareness, and education around the subject of SpLD.

10. **Commanding Officers of initial training (Phases 1 and 2) and Phase 3 establishments** should, in addition to the responsibilities of the Chain of Command:

a. within resources and without compromising the mandated training performance standards, or operational effectiveness, or causing a detriment to others, provide appropriate support for recruits, trainees, or students with SpLD.

b. ensure that trainers and staff involved in supervisory care are aware of SpLD and their recruits, trainees or students that have such conditions are signposted to the right support and their SpLD Advisor.

c. resource, where possible, appropriate support by trained SpLD Advisors during Phase 1, 2 and 3 training. Time and space should be created to allow such support to take place, within resources and training standards.

11. The **SpLD Advisor** should:

a. be appropriately trained and qualified at, or formally working towards, the levels stipulated at paragraph 4.a-d above. Additionally, undertaking personal CPD to maintain and enhance their current working level, including professional accreditation, working within the boundaries of their qualifications.

b. be available to the SP with SpLD and ensure that their SP is aware of their role and responsibilities, working within the Chain of Command to provide guidance, advice, and support, together with coaching assistance as required by the SP. Additionally, to liaise with the Chain of Command on any changes to the working or training environment that may appropriately be made to create a more suitable environment.

c. offer advice on what support may be available to those SP requiring it. Early emphasis should be placed on coaching and the development of coping strategies for the SP to implement and manage. The SpLD Advisor can monitor and assist as appropriate, but it should be emphasised that the responsibility for managing SpLD lies with the individual and with the SpLD Advisor in a supporting role only.

d. if appropriate and with the agreement of the SP, conduct screening to ascertain if/what SpLD may be present to better focus support. Screening should be conducted using an approved SpLD Adult Screening tool. A SpLD Assessors' Requirements and Guidelines can be found at Annex B.

e.   where a SpLD is suspected, if due to the severity or uncertainty of the learning difference, as indicated by the SpLD Adult Screening Tool result, an assessment assisted by an Educational, Occupational Psychologist [15] or Specialist Teacher, if deemed necessary, may be conducted. This should lead to a formal statement of practical strategies to be adopted by the SP. In consultation with the SP and the agreement of the line manager, trainer or commander, the SpLD Advisor may then draw up an ILP that provides an appropriate level of support, coaching and coping strategies. On posting, the ILP should be communicated to the individual's new establishment (refer to paragraph 16 for guidance on confidentiality and handling of personal data).

f.   where Defence-funded support has been provided, sS are encouraged to record all externally directed ILPs (Individual Learning Plans), track and pass from losing to gaining unit on reassignment of SP concerned and keep records for a minimum of 7 years before archiving (refer to paragraph 16 for guidance on confidentiality and handling of personal data).

g.   understand that it is the responsibility of the SP to proactively manage their SpLD, seeking support where appropriate. Any support that is offered should be done so at the earliest opportunity and at the most appropriate level, such as through coaching and the provision of guidance on coping strategies. More formalised assessments and support mechanisms should be viewed as escalatory measures rather than a start point and enacted only if necessary.

h.   apply any appropriate assessment access arrangements as recommended by a Specialist Teacher or Psychologist, which should be managed and recorded by using the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) Form 8 process[16].

12.   **Individual responsibilities**. Individuals who enter service or join a new unit, station, or ship, with an identified SpLD that impacts on their work or training or requires some form of Defence involvement, are advised to inform their line manager, trainer, or commander at the first opportunity; bringing to their attention any previously agreed form of support, or ILP, for action where appropriate. SP with SpLD that does not impact on their working lives, or who have evolved coping strategies that do not require Defence involvement, need not inform their line manager, trainer, or commander; although it may be prudent to do so. It is the primary responsibility of the individual to manage their SpLD, supported where and when appropriate by their SpLD Advisor. The individual is free to seek advice from their SpLD Advisor at any time, but any formal support should be provided in conjunction with the Chain of Command.

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[15] A Psychologist can examine the individual needs of SP in training, education or work and, through tests and interviews will establish a greater understanding of and individual's Learning Support requirements. The use of a psychologist should be considered as a last resort and a supporting activity to the SpLD Advisor. Too early involvement of a psychologist and 'over recommendation' should be avoided.
[16] These assessment access arrangements also apply to appropriate examinations taken by SP with identified SpLD needs at any Defence Training Establishment. The JCQ Form 8 process should be adopted within 15 working days of notification. https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Form-8_2020-1.pdf.

2.2 Governance

13. **Sponsor**. This Defence Direction is sponsored by TESRR who is responsible for maintaining the policy. The POC (Point of Contact) is C1 Personal Development and Education (People-TESR-PersDevEdC1), who chairs the SpLD Forum, which takes place biannually.

2.3 Funding

14. Responsibility for managing and mitigating SpLD lies with the individual SP. This includes financial aspects that may be a consequence of such management or mitigation that falls outside the MOD's responsibilities to provide suitable working conditions. To support, advise and assist, SCs are required to fund through their Top-Level Budget, the following provisions:

    a.   Establishment of trained, qualified, and placed SpLD Advisors.

    b.   Specialist diagnosis, assessment, and support through external professional assistance, such as psychologist assistance, if required.

    c.   Practical and appropriate changes to the training and working environment (such as coloured overlays) where feasible within resource constraints, that do not adversely affect others, erode mandated training standards or threaten operational effectiveness.

    d.   When undertaking elective learning, Individuals may also choose to use their Standard Learning Credits[17] for certain types of additional support i.e., Specialist Tuition or assisted technology.

2.4 Management

15. **Tracking and record keeping**. There is no requirement for sS to identify and track all SP with SpLD, as the responsibility for informing the Chain of Command of a SpLD condition that may affect training or work lies with the individual. However, sS are encouraged to make SpLD documentation available when required (subject to paragraph 16 below).

16. **Confidentiality**. There is no requirement for SP with SpLD to inform their line manager, trainer, or commander, if their condition does not affect their training or work. However, if they do notify their line manager, that information is to be treated with care and a MOD Consent to Share SpLD Information and Data form must be completed when required, marking up any documentation as OFFICIAL SENSITIVE – PERSONAL. If consent has been given, that information may be retained, recorded, and shared within the Chain of Command. Processing SPs' SpLD information will enable MOD to offer an effective SpLD support service and to meet our obligations to our personnel.[18] Any processing should

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[17] Funding policy relating to SpLD support via the SLC is contained in JSP 822, Volume 9.

[18] The lawful bases under Article 6 General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) justifying the processing of SPs' SpLD information will therefore be: Article 6(1)(e) (Public task); Article 6(1)(c) (Legal obligation) and/or Article 6(1)(b) (Contract). The lawful bases under Article 9 GDPR justifying the processing of SPs' SpLD information (where this constitutes special category personal data) will be: Article 9(2)(g) (Substantial public interest); and/or Article 9(2)(h) (Assessment of the working capacity of the employee).

be conducted in accordance with the Data Protection Principles.

2.5 SpLD Advisor Training

17. **SpLD Advisor training**. sS SpLD Advisors are encouraged to be members of professional institutions which run courses for SpLD training. The following list is not exhaustive and does not prevent sS from seeking training at any other suitable training establishment or alternative organisation.

Key Organisations	Course, Accreditation and Other Details	Websites
British Dyslexia Association (BDA)	Provides information on Continuous Professional Development, Training, Assessment, Resources, Tutor and Assessor Directory. BDA also has webinars and train the trainer material for Neurodiversity awareness training.	https://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/services Telephone Number: (0333) 4054555

Key Organisations	Course, Accreditation and Other Details	Websites
SpLD Assessment Standards Committee (SASC)	Offers a wealth of information on Learning Providers offering SpLD training courses. Additionally, this website has other useful guidance, resources and links.	http://www.sasc.org.uk Telephone Number: (01386) 712740
The Professional Association of Teachers of Students with SpLD (PATOSS)	For all those concerned with the teaching and support of pupils with SpLD, for example: dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia. Membership is open to qualified teachers in SpLD and those studying for either the certificate or the diploma in SpLD.	https://www.patoss-dyslexia.org/ Telephone Number: (01386) 712650

3 Annexes

A.   SpLD Points of Contact
B.   MOD Specific Learning Differences Assessor's Requirements and Guidelines

SpLD Points of Contact

SERVICE	POLICY LEAD	POC
NAVY	LDO SO2 POL Navy Command HQ MP 3.3 Leach Building Whale Island Portsmouth PO2 8BY	Individual L&D Elective Pol SO22 Navy Command HQ MP 3.3 Leach Building Whale Island Portsmouth PO2 8BY
ARMY	SO1 Learning Development Personnel Policy (Army) Army HQ Blenheim Building Marlborough Lines Andover SP11 8HJ Mil: 94393 6132	SO2 Skills Army HQ APSG Ed Branch Ramillies Building Marlborough Lines Andover SP11 8HJ Mil: 94391 2362
ROYAL AIR FORCE	OC A&E Wing 22Gp Central Training School A&E Wg Room 221B Trenchard Hall RAFC Cranwell Sleaford NG34 8HB Mil: 95751 6510	SO3 A&E Wing 22Gp Central Training School A&E Wg Room 221B Trenchard Hall RAFC Cranwell Sleaford NG34 8HB Mil: 95751 6888
DEFAC	SO2 Training & Education Development Development Faculty Defence Academy Shrivenham Swindon SN6 8LA Mil: 96161 8287	SO2 Training & Education Development Development Faculty Defence Academy Shrivenham Swindon SN6 8LA Mil: 96161 8287

MOD Specific Learning Differences Assessor's Requirements and Guidelines

PURPOSE OF ASSESSMENT

Assessment within the Ministry of Defence (MOD) workplace should support an understanding of any inconsistencies between what is expected of an individual during training, and for their role in the workplace. The main purpose of assessment is to develop contextual understanding and should promote an insight for the organisation to appropriately and better support the person enabling them to flourish in their career.

ASSESSOR QUALIFICATIONS

Extracted from the Specific Learning Difficulties Assessment Standards Committee (SASC) Guidelines[19]:

Specialist teachers must hold a current practising certificate in assessing specific learning difficulties issued by their relevant professional association, for example, PATOSS (the Professional Association of Teachers of Students with Specific Learning Difficulties), Dyslexia Action or the British Dyslexia Association.

Psychologists must be registered with the Health Care and Professions Council [HCPC, mandatory from July 2012]. Before July 2012 psychologists were required to hold a current practising certificate issued by their relevant professional association, for example, the British Psychological Association. [The British Psychological Society has now ceased issuing practising certificates.] See news item on this site: http://www.sasc.org.uk/NewsItem.aspx?id=33.

MOD REQUIREMENTS

For a MOD-funded Assessment, there should be focus on the gap between the skills an individual has and those they need to be able to undertake effective day-to-day work and to be operationally effective. The results of an assessment should always lead to an explanation which addresses the issue of why the individual sought advice or was referred for an assessment in the first place. The MOD will provide a general role performance statement, associated with the branch, trade or stream of work, and relevant job specifications or operational requirements for the individual. The assessment process is to be directly associated with this information and should use an integrated approach.

INDIVIDUAL'S NEEDS

The assessment and the subsequent written report are a form of advocacy that should lead the person, those working with them and the organisation, to being better informed as a result. The information discussed and generated during the process should be

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[19] http://www.sasc.org.uk/SASC_Default.aspx?id=5.

communicated in clear, straightforward language. The person should be given opportunities throughout to clarify and check understanding of contextual implications.

All tests, checklists and questionnaires used should be valid for the individual and clearly relate to explanations for any identified challenges. Every aspect of the assessment is to be focussed on providing advice on the development of strategies which are directly applicable to the individual's role, workplace, operational requirements, and wider life.

The use of feedback alongside normal distributions curve graphs or other visual aids is essential to allay concerns and worries about how the test is progressing. This is to be used to support the individual to develop a better understanding of what the results mean for them. Many people worry that the assessment will reveal stigmatizing information, so the assessor must provide reassurance about the positive aspects of having an assessment at the earliest possible opportunity in the process.

CONSIDERATIONS

The assessment is to be structured in the context of the MOD and the individual's needs. There will be unique demands on education and training as well as MOD operational needs. Professional judgement should be used regarding which battery of tests are useful for each assessment using the SASC guidelines for Adult Assessment and are to be appropriately selected to meet the requirement, rather than simply following a sequence of testing.

Holistic Approach

Acceptance and understanding are essential factors in determining whether an individual can move forward and usefully develop strategies as the results of an assessment. Factors such as: family background; educational background and aspirations; cultural influences; appropriate physical and psychological health aspects; and employment history should be comprehensively explored. There should be clear benefit from the assessment process to support a wider understanding of the balance between the output of the MOD and the individual's performance in their role.

Work and Training Focus

The assessment process in this context is one situated in the broader MOD remit, and this must be kept in mind when planning, conducting, providing feedback and reporting on an individual. The MOD has some unique ways of training and working with operational considerations to manage. The differences in team working, individual roles and wider cultural norms (including frequent transition between jobs and locations) must be fully researched based on the information provided by the MOD prior to conducting an assessment. These aspects are all to be commented on in the final report where appropriate.

Adult Assessment in the MOD

Assessors should maintain an open-minded approach and avoid approaching the process as a labelling exercise. The assessment is a process of explanation in which underlying cognitive abilities and inconsistencies are highlighted in an informative and constructive way for the person within their role in the MOD and their wider life. A thorough assessment ought to identify a person's abilities, strengths, and existing ways of working so that future strategies and recommendations can be insightful and take appropriate consideration of balancing work-based contextual requirements and the individual's normal ways of learning or working.

Boundaries and Referral

The assessor is to be clear about diagnosis boundaries within their qualifications and abilities. Inclusion of comments on Visual Stress require a professional optometry qualification and diagnosis of conditions such as Autistic Spectrum Disorders needs a clinical qualification. The boundaries of qualification level are to be explicitly explained to the MOD and the individual prior to assessment. Within the SASC guidelines, due comment can be made on additional factors, when disclosed by the individual, such as physical illness, medication, and mental health-related considerations (such as low mood, persistent worry, or a diagnosed condition). The assessor must always defer to a qualified professional in the appropriate area when further information is required, or concerns are raised during the assessment process.

Feedback and Disclosure

A tripartite reporting system is to be used so that the diagnostic section can be kept private if the individual feels that they do not want to share the details of the background interview and test results. The summary of the report and the recommendations must be shared with the MOD. Disclosure for this is to be done at the assessment and a signed agreement must be provided by the individual using the MOD Consent to Share SpLD Information and Data form. The reason for asking for disclosure of these elements must be discussed so that the individual can make an informed decision about the positive impact in context for development, compensations, and adjustments. It is also to be made clear that the individual can opt out of the test process at any time and only the aspects which are relevant to the MOD will be shared, with consent, unless the person wishes to disclose more fully.

Lawful basis for processing SpLD information

Processing SPs' SpLD information will enable MOD to offer an effective SpLD support service and to meet our obligations to our personnel. The lawful bases under Article 6 GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) justifying the processing of SPs' SpLD information will therefore be: Article 6(1)(e) (Public task); Article 6(1)(c) (Legal obligation) and/or Article 6(1)(b) (Contract). The lawful bases under Article 9 GDPR justifying the processing of SPs' SpLD information (where this constitutes special category personal data) will be: Article 9(2)(g) (Substantial public interest); and/or Article 9(2)(h) (Assessment of the working capacity of the employee). Any processing should be conducted in accordance with the Data Protection Principles.

SUMMARY

Underlying all these guidelines would be the experience and professionalism of the assessor. This document sets out the requirement and standards for effective assessment reports within the MOD. The need for contextual understanding and constructive feedback to the individual and organisation is critical to supporting our people and maintaining the effectiveness of our organisation.