

What is a Psycho-Educational Assessment?

A psycho-educational assessment is usually requested by the school when a support plan needs to be developed for a learner. Sometimes learners experience barriers that prevent them from reaching their full academic potential. These barriers may include dyslexia, attention deficit disorder, or other physical or emotional obstacles. It may also be necessary to determine the scholastic level at which a learner is functioning if a family has moved between countries, switched languages of instruction, or if a learner is moving from a homeschooling environment back into a formal mainstream school, so that appropriate grade placement can be made.

Why is a Psycho-Educational Assessment requested?

The Department of Education provides various support strategies when a learner experiences scholastic barriers. Among these strategies are examination accommodations such as extra time, a reader, or a scribe. The psycho-educational assessment identifies what type of barrier a learner may have and provides guidance on the type of accommodations for which an application should be made.

How does the Psycho-Educational Assessment work?

An application for examination accommodations such as extra time, a reader, a scribe, or exemption from Afrikaans and/or Mathematics must be submitted to the Department of Education before the learner's Grade 12 year, together with a psycho-educational report. This report may not be older than two years.

The report serves as proof that the learner experiences barriers that hinder performance, so that a support plan can be put into place in time. The report reflects the learner's performance and psychological functioning on various prescribed tests. The assessment includes a cognitive (intellectual), scholastic, and emotional evaluation to determine which barriers a learner experiences that prevent him/her from performing as expected.

How long does the assessment take?

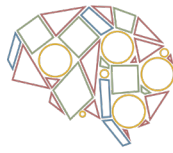
This type of assessment takes 5–6 hours and is completed in one morning or over two afternoons.

It includes IQ tests, aptitude tests, neurological tests, basic vision and hearing checks, and various reading, spelling, writing, and mathematical tests. All the results are scored and compared with the normative scores for the learner's age group, so that performance can be measured against the expected standard for their age and grade.

How do parents and the school receive the results?

After the assessment, a full report is compiled containing all test results and recommendations for support. This report is available 7 days after the testing. The results are discussed with the parents during a one-hour feedback session. After this discussion, the report is sent digitally to both the school and parents.

The school then submits the report, along with the required forms, to the Department of Education, where a panel of experts decides which recommendations and accommodations will be granted to the learner.



How does the procedure work?

When a school refers a learner, forms are sent to the parents to complete and return to the psychologist. The assessment is booked, and the learner is dropped off at the practice and collected again after testing. Parents are not involved or present during the assessment.

One week later, parents attend a one-hour consultation (without the learner) during which the results and recommendations are discussed.

The report is then sent to the parents and the school. The school uses the report to apply for support and, if necessary, to obtain further professional input.

What are the costs of a Psycho-Educational Assessment?

Psychologists usually charge an hourly rate as prescribed by the different medical aids (currently R1194.70–R1250, depending on the fund).

In this practice, efforts are made to assist parents by charging an overall package fee rather than an hourly rate. This is a cash practice, which means parents must settle the assessment before the testing takes place. A receipt is issued after the feedback session, which parents can then submit to their medical aid for reimbursement.

The cost of a psycho-educational assessment in this practice is R6000, which includes the complete service:

- Processing and analysis of information provided by parents (digital forms completed by parents);
- Processing of information supplied by the school (digital forms completed by the teacher);
- Assessment of the learner at the practice (5–6 hours);
- Full report with all results in raw and normative scores;
- Feedback consultation with parents;
- Report emailed to the school and parents.

A security password is used to ensure confidentiality of the learner's personal information. Only those with the password can open the report. Parents provide consent for the report to be sent and indicate who is authorized to read it.