

What is the purpose of an assessment?

An assessment report by a registered psychologist provides a professional diagnosis along with recommendations and practical strategies for effective functioning.

The diagnosis (or diagnoses) are based on data collected through observation, interview, background history, medical or academic records, and / or standardized testing – and the criteria in the standard psychological reference manual, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders(5th edition).

The type of assessment report is determined by the purpose, / goal / outcome, such as:

Assessment	Purpose / goal / outcome
Consultation	Evaluating a particular practical problem and identifying useful strategies (without any need for a formal diagnosis), such as a behavior problem with a child or teen
Clinical	Diagnosis of a neurological differences (such as autism) and identifying appropriate supports and coping strategies
Adaptive skills	A clinical assessment focused primarily on problems in basic functioning, along with neurological differences, in support of an application for the Disability Tax Credit and/or FSCD and/or AISH and/or guardianship for a teen approaching adulthood
Psycho-educational	Identify psychological / neurological and educational / learning differences to access school-based supports and implement an Individualized Program Plan (IPP) – or access post-secondary supports, accommodations and funding
Adult transition	Preparation for the transition to adulthood, addressing issues such as independent living, career training and employment
Employment	Diagnosis of a neurological difference and its practical effects, along with recommended accommodations and supports, in an employment situation (often triggered by a stress leave)
Legal-related	Diagnosis of a neurological difference and its practical effects, along with recommendations, in a legal-related matter such as a wrongful dismissal lawsuit, conflict / appeal with an employer / health care provider over an extended stress / disability leave, human rights complaint, criminal charge, or divorce matter

Footnote: Typically, an adaptive skills report will be taken to a family doctor who will review it and use it as supporting evidence in signing a Disability Tax Credit and / or guardianship application, unless the individual has an extremely low IQ score (in the range referred to as mental retardation) in which case a psychologist can sign the form.



Assessment

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the cost of an assessment?

The cost is based on the actual time involved and charged at the PAA Recommended Fee Schedule (2017 rate is \$190 per hour / \$300 per hour for legal-related matters). Canada Revenue Agency also requires us to collect GST which is added to this rate.

The amount of time can vary depending on the complexity of the issues involved, but typically a clinical assessment or adaptive skills assessment will be about 10-12 hours, and a psycho-educational assessment will be about 15-18 hours.

Clients pay us directly, and we provide receipts on letterhead with a breakdown of the dates and times of sessions, and our professional registration number.

If you have an extended health care plan, then some portion of your assessment might be reimbursed to you by your provider (but you will need to check with them for details).

Psychologist fees are also considered to be medical expenses by the Canada Revenue Agency, and non-reimbursed can be claimed on an income tax return.

Clients with FSCD funding for counselling can also obtain reimbursement for a portion of their payments (typically about \$95-98 or half the standard psychologist fee).

Academic advisers at several post-institutions have also advised us that individuals can obtain reimbursement for \$1200 of the cost of a psycho-educational report, if the report includes a learning disability diagnosis and recommended academic accommodations. Full-time post-secondary students who need academic accommodations because of a neurological / learning difference are also eligible to receive grant money each year.

An adaptive skills report is typically used to access funding from the provincial or federal government (e.g., FSCD, DTC, or AISH), which can sometimes help offset the cost of the initial investment in the assessment.

What can I do to help reduce the time involved with an assessment?

Obtain copies of all relevant medical and school records (i.e., cumulative file), and any previous assessment reports (e.g., speech and language, occupational therapy).

Write up a summary timeline (in point form if you wish) of major life stages (e.g., childhood and elementary school, junior and senior high school, post-secondary and career, independent adult life, marriage and family).

List several real-world examples of challenges or problems to be addressed, providing as much detail as possible, and describing the incident from start to finish.