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## Students with Disability Assessment Service

### Term 1 Assessment Service Update

#### March 2026

Welcome to the Term 1 newsletter from the Students with Disability Assessment Service (SwD-AS). We hope the year has started well for you all.

In this edition you will find information on the following topics:

- Updated referral forms
- Confirming appointments
- Who should complete the Vineland-3 assessment?
- Referrals for language and/or speech assessments welcomed
- Schools' Dashboard
- Where to find more information

#### Updated referral forms

Our referral forms have been updated and are being sent with referral packs as of this week. The updated forms provide the most recent and accurate information for schools and families. As stated in the referral pack email, please make sure you use the referral forms sent with each individual referral to avoid any delays when processing your completed documents.

Significant changes have been made to the former Parent Consent Form, which is now titled **Parent/Carer Information and Consent Form**. This form provides detailed information about the referral and assessment process for parents and is followed by the Consent Form. Please ensure:

- the full document is provided to parents, with support to read and understand it, if needed. This helps to ensure parents are giving informed consent for the referral and assessment through our service.
- parents tick the box on the Consent Form to confirm they have been given a copy of the information and understand the process involved.
- parents tick one of the boxes to select the relevant service they are giving consent for (i.e., cognitive and adaptive behaviour assessment, adaptive behaviour assessment only, language and/or speech assessment). It is important the correct box is ticked for each referral. Schools may like to support parents complete this part of the form.

The **Information for Schools** document has also been updated and provides information about our role as the assessment service, the referral and assessment process, and other details such as interpreters, OHS and child safety requirements, assessment tools and Vineland-3 results. A checklist is provided at the end of the document to support schools with the return of referral documents.

## Confirming appointments

It is recommended that schools contact parents/carers one to two days before the scheduled assessment date to confirm the appointment. Interpreters should also be confirmed with the interpreting service where needed. This will help to minimise any delays if the appointment needs to be rescheduled due to student absence or interpreter issues. It is also important that students are well on the day of the assessment and have taken any regular medication. Schools are requested to contact the assessor or our office on (03) 9678 5100 as soon as they are aware an assessment cannot proceed as planned.

## Who should complete the Vineland-3 assessment?

The Vineland-3 is a formal, standardised assessment that plays an important role in the assessment and diagnosis of intellectual developmental disorder (intellectual disability).

The Vineland-3 must be completed by a teacher who has worked with the student recently, and for at least 2 months. To meet these requirements, Vinelands completed in Term 1 should be completed by either:

- the 2025 teacher
- the 2025 teacher, together with the 2026 teacher, or
- another staff member who has worked with the student in the classroom regularly (preferably daily) for more than 2 months, with details provided on the Vineland cover sheet.

Vinelands completed from Term 2 should be completed by the 2026 teacher.

Our 'Vineland-3 Digital Cover Sheet' has been updated to help us gather the information needed to determine the validity of the assessment completed. Answering the questions in the sheet, and reading the instructions on the accompanying pages, will help ensure a valid assessment is completed and minimise any delays from incomplete information.

Schools are strongly encouraged to complete the Vineland-3 through our service if they are planning a referral for a cognitive assessment. This helps to ensure results can be easily verified and avoids delays and extra work if assessments need to be repeated.

More information about the Vineland-3 assessment can be found in our webinar [here](#).

## Referrals for language and/or speech assessments welcomed

Did you know schools may continue to refer to us for a speech and/or language assessment to better understand the support needs of students where a severe communication disorder is having a significant functional impact on communication, social interactions and learning?

We will consider referrals for students who have a severe communication disorder and high functional needs, and there is evidence they are likely to have:

- a severe developmental language disorder (DLD), characterised by significant and persistent language difficulties affecting the student's everyday functioning and with **no known reason** for these difficulties. The student may have difficulty speaking and/or understanding language.

### AND/OR

- a severe speech sound disorder as a result of childhood apraxia of speech (CAS), a rare and complex speech disorder affecting the student's ability to organise the movements of the muscles used in speech. Teachers, peers and family members will often have difficulty understanding the student's speech.

Evidence of high functional needs will assist in determining if a referral to the assessment service is appropriate. This includes evidence of significant impact of the language and/or speech disorder on everyday interactions and social communication, learning and academic skills, attention and behaviour, and social, mental, and emotional wellbeing.

Referrals are not recommended for students:

- already fully assessed, or
- receiving services through an external or Student Support Services (SSS) speech pathologist, or
- whose language difficulties are associated with a **known condition**, such as brain injury, sensorineural hearing loss, autism, intellectual developmental disorder or genetic conditions such as Down syndrome, as these students will not meet the criteria for DLD.

If you are unsure whether a referral to our service is appropriate for our service, please contact us for discussion.

### Schools' Dashboard

All schools have access to their own personalised Dashboard. This offers a quick and efficient option to check on the progress and current status of referrals. You are welcome to follow up with a phone call or email if you need any more information.

## [Log in to the Schools' Dashboard](#)

### Are you interested in more information?

Visit our [website](#) for more information about:

- how our service works
- intellectual developmental disorder and developmental language disorder
- Frequently Asked Questions and other useful documents

You might also be interested in watching our webinar about intellectual developmental disorder: [Understanding intellectual developmental disorder](#)

### Would you like to contact us?

T: 03 9678 5100

E: [SwD@Assessments.com.au](mailto:SwD@Assessments.com.au)

W: [Assessment Service for Students with Disability - AKG Australia](#)



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