



Screening Tool

This is a checklist for GPs to assist them in identifying a learning disability. This is not intended as a diagnostic tool so always apply sound clinical judgement.

Definition of a learning disability: A significantly reduced ability to understand new or complex information, to learn new skills (Significantly impaired intelligence)
AND A reduced ability to cope independently, (Impaired social / adaptive functioning)
AND Which started before adulthood (onset before aged 18) with a lasting effect on development

Questions to consider	yes ✓	no ✗
Has anyone ever told the person that they have a learning disability?		
Is there a diagnosis of a learning disability/mental handicap in any notes? IQ under 70		
Did person attend any special schools (SILC) or were they statemented in mainstream school?		
Did the person achieve qualifications at school?(GCSE at low grades could indicate LD but high grade GCSE, A Levels or university education LD is not likely)		
Is the person known to the Community Learning Disability Team?		
Does person have a consultant psychiatrist for learning disabilities?		
Does person need assistance with transport? (unable to get around independently?)		
Does person have problems with simple numerical calculations? (i.e. 'If I gave you £5 to buy milk. Milk costs £1.50 – how much is left?)		
Does person have problems reading? (reading a novel or newspaper usually rules out a learning disability.)		
How does the person function in society? Does the person need support with activities of daily living?		

Does person have difficulty with:

Communicating needs	Yes	No
Writing	Yes	No
Self-Care	Yes	No
Living independently	Yes	No
Interpreting social cues	Yes	No
Controlling behaviour	Yes	No
Co-ordinating movement	Yes	No
Learning new skills	Yes	No
Understanding new or complex information	Yes	No

Several 'YES' answers will often indicate the presence of a Learning Disability

Factors which MAY NOT indicate a learning disability

- Normal development until other factors impact (before 18).
- Diagnosis of ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia or Asperger's
- Successfully attend mainstream education without support.
- Gained qualifications (GCSE and/or A 'Levels)
- Able to function socially without support
- Able to complete complex purchases e. g. buying a house.
- Able to drive a car.
- Contact with mental health services
- Recorded IQ above 70.

Factors which MAY indicate a learning disability

- Record of delayed development/ difficulties with social functioning & daily living before 18.
 - Requires significant assistance to provide for own survival (eating & drinking, keeping self clean, warm and clothed) and/or with social/ community adaptation (e.g. Social problem solving/reasoning).
- NB need for assistance may be subtle.
- Presence of all three criteria for LD i.e. Impairment of intellectual functioning/social adaptive functioning and age of onset.
 - Range of information presenting a picture of difficulties in a number of areas of function, not explainable by another 'label'.
 - Contact with specialist Learning Disability consultant.