



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 X
Has anyone ever told the person that they have a learning disability?		
Is there a diagnosis of a learning disability in any notes? (IQ under 70).		
Did person attend a special 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 the person have difficulty with:

Communicating needs	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Writing	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Self-Care	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Living independently	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Interpreting social cues	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Controlling behaviour	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Co-ordinating movement	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Learning new skills	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Understanding new or complex information	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

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 and 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.