



SASC CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT for 2025–26

Welcome to this 2026 AGM.

SASC continues its core remit by working in a highly collegiate way to ensure that best assessment practice is available and maintained. We work to support our professionals and their learners, underpinning standards in assessment practice across the range of specific learning difficulties assessors are called upon to assess.

This year has been one of significant consolidation and forward movement. Alongside major updates to assessment guidance, SASC has taken on new responsibilities for accreditation, strengthened its infrastructure, and deepened its engagement with national policy at a time of considerable change for the SEND system.

Major Developments in 2025–26

1. SASC Takes on Accreditation of Specialist Teacher and Assessor Qualifications

A landmark development this year has been SASC's assumption of responsibility for the **accreditation and re-accreditation of SpLD Specialist Literacy and Numeracy Teacher and Assessor qualifications**.

Following the closure of the BDA Accreditation Board, SASC has worked closely with professional bodies and course leaders to ensure a smooth transition. The Course Approval Working Group has established clear criteria, timelines and processes, and accreditation reviews are now underway for courses due for 2026 delivery, including University of Birmingham, Bath Spa and Edge Hill.

This development strengthens national coherence and ensures that specialist training routes remain rigorous, transparent and aligned with SASC standards.

2. Strengthening Specialist Pathways

Work has continued across several working groups to clarify and strengthen pathways for specialist practitioners. This includes:

- Developing **APEL routes** for experienced dyscalculia assessors.
- Clarifying **maths assessment competencies** and pathways for those moving between literacy and numeracy specialisms.
- Mapping **pre-16 and post-16 assessment pathways** to ensure consistency across age phases.
- Drafting new website content to articulate the **holistic role of Specialist Teacher Assessors**, in collaboration with ACHIPPP and sector partners.

This work is essential to ensuring a sustainable, well-trained specialist workforce.

Updated and Integrated Assessment Guidance

3. Revised Report Format for Diagnostic Assessments of SpLDs

We have issued our updated Report Format for Diagnostic Assessments of SpLDs with accompanying guidance. This reflects the Delphi definition of dyslexia and incorporates extensive consultation with course leaders, practitioners, academics, STEC and our maths and dyscalculia working group.

The updated format will be **required for all diagnostic assessments from 1 January 2027**.

4. Updated Guidance Across Key Areas

This year has seen the culmination of several major guidance projects:

- Updated **Maths Difficulties and Dyscalculia Guidance**
- Updated **Visual Difficulties Guidance**
- Updated **DCD/Dyspraxia Guidance** (finalised for publication)
- Templates for **onward referrals**
- FAQs on headings and structure in the new report format

These updates reflect current research, sector feedback and evolving assessment practice.

5. AI and Assessment Practice

AI has become a significant theme in assessment practice. Concerns have been raised about third parties using AI tools to summarise or alter diagnostic reports, often inaccurately.

SASC is drafting a formal statement to accompany assessment reports:

“The content is confidential and should be considered in its entirety. No part may be copied or quoted or manipulated through AI without prior consent of the author.”

A working group will also produce guidance for assessors on the appropriate use of AI in report writing. AI will be a major theme at the 2026 Conference.

6. Policy Engagement: SASC’s Response to the SEND White Paper

SASC has played a central role in national policy discussions following the publication of *Every Child Thriving and Achieving*.

Our response welcomed the ambition to strengthen early identification and consistency, but raised significant concerns about the removal of **Cognition and Learning** as an area of need. We highlighted the risks this poses for learners with

dyslexia, dyscalculia and related SpLDs, whose difficulties: “do not map cleanly onto any of the proposed areas” and risk being “misallocated to behavioural, sensory or communication categories.”

We emphasised the need for:

- Reinstatement of Cognition & Learning
- Universal screening and evidence-based intervention
- Access to specialist assessment
- Growth of the specialist workforce
- Safeguards around Individual Support Plans (ISPs)

SASC will continue to advocate for clarity, equity and specialist expertise as the system moves toward reform.

7. Transfer of Dyslexia-SpLD Trust Assets to SASC

A significant organisational milestone this year was the agreement to transfer the assets of the **Dyslexia-SpLD Trust** to SASC.

This includes:

- Three DST domains
- The Interventions for Literacy domain
- The Literacy & Dyslexia Professional Development Framework

This transfer strengthens the infrastructure supporting professional standards and ensures continuity of trusted public-facing information.

8. STEC and Test Evaluation

STEC has continued its substantial work updating the recommended test list, including clarification on the use of subtests within batteries. The 2025/26 Test List has been published, and STEC continues to collaborate with the BPS Test Standards Committee.

9. Enquiries, FAQs and Public Guidance

SASC has responded to over 120 enquiries this year. We are now developing a **public FAQ section** to support assessors and course providers, ensuring greater transparency and consistency.

10. Conference and Professional Learning

Our 2026 Conference, with its focus on integrating updated guidance into practice, is exceptionally well attended. We are pleased to make webinar recordings available for 12 months, supporting ongoing professional development.

Acknowledgements

I want to express my sincere thanks to:

- **The SASC Board**, who give their time and expertise so generously.
- **STEC**, the Cross-Standardisation Committee, and all working groups.
- **Our advisors, course leaders and professional bodies**, who contribute to consultations and policy development.
- **Alice Thomas**, our Assessment Issues Coordinator, whose expertise and collaborative approach have been invaluable.
- **All those who contributed to the Report Format, Maths Difficulties, Visual Difficulties and DCD/Dyspraxia guidance**—a remarkable collective effort.

Your commitment strengthens standards, supports assessors, and ultimately improves outcomes for learners.

We welcome volunteers from our membership who have particular interests or specialisms to share to join our work. If you are interested please contact me.

Directors 2026–27

Directors	Institution Represented (or Affiliation)	Term
Lynn Greenwold (Chair)	Independent	2024–2028
Julia Kender (Financial Director)	Independent	2024–2028
Lesley Browne	Patoss	2025–2029
Kate Blundell	Independent	2025–2029
Helen Duncan	Independent	2024–2028
Dylan Griffiths	PASSHE	2025–2029
Mark Loveday	Independent	2023–2027
Michelle Luciano	Independent	2023–2027
Rachael McMullen	HADC	2026–2030
Lynn Lovell	BDA	2023–2027
Anna Smith	Dyslexia Guild	2026–2030
Alice Thomas	Independent	2025–2029
Mark Turner	Independent	2026–2030

Observers:

Hannah Farndon (BPS), Florence Jackson (ACHIPP), Anita Thompson (ACHIPP), Denise Thornton (ACHIPP), Sarah Guest, Alison Szalay, Louise van der Valk (STEC).

In conclusion

This has been a year of significant progress and thoughtful transition. SASC has taken on new responsibilities, strengthened its guidance, and deepened its role in national policy discussions.

As always, our strength lies in our collective expertise and our shared commitment to high-quality, evidence-based assessment practice. I invite all members to continue contributing to consultations, working groups and discussions. Together, we will continue to shape and uphold the standards that define our profession.

Lynn Greenwold, Chair

June 2026