

Appendix B—Glossary of Terms Related to Assessment

Academic Performance or Achievement Tests: assessments used by schools, school districts, and states that focus on educational performance or achievement in specific subject areas such as reading, spelling, or mathematics.

Accommodations: changes made in a classroom, work site, or assessment procedure that help people with disabilities learn, work, or receive services. Accommodations are designed not to lower expectations for performance in school or work but to alleviate the effects of a disability.

Aptitude: the potential to learn.

Aptitude Test: a test that measures the vocational potential or capacities of an individual to succeed in future career endeavors.

Assessment: the process of collecting data for the purpose of making decisions. Four domains of assessment include the educational, the vocational, the psychological, and the medical.

Assistive Technology (AT) Assessments: activities used to determine an individual's need for technology and ability to use technology. These are accompanied with recommendations for training and specific adaptive equipment.

Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD): a family of related chronic neurobiological disorders that interferes with an individual's capacity to inhibit behavior (impulsivity) and to attend to tasks (inattention) in developmentally appropriate ways.

Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD): a family of related chronic neurobiological disorders that interferes with an individual's capacity to regulate activity level (hyperactivity), to inhibit behavior (impulsivity), and to attend to tasks (inattention) in developmentally appropriate ways.

Behavioral, Social, and Emotional Assessments: activities used by schools and workforce preparation programs to identify, diagnose, and suggest treatment of mental health and chemical health problems.

Cognitive Abilities Tests: assessments used by schools and workforce preparation programs to measure intellectual skills and to diagnose neuropsychological problems and learning disabilities.

Criterion-referenced Tests: instruments used to measure whether an individual has learned specific information or can perform certain activities.

Fair Test: a test that is free from bias and conforms to recognized test administration standards and ethics.

Hidden Disabilities: disabilities that are not apparent upon casual observation. Hidden disabilities include, but are not limited to, Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD), Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD), Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), mental health or emotional problems (such as depression, anxiety disorders, or conduct disorders), Epilepsy, and Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI).

IQ Testing or Intelligence Testing: the measurement of an individual's general cognitive ability to function within various community settings.

Independent Living Skills Assessments: assessments that are often conducted by teachers, counselors, or others to determine how well an individual can engage in activities of daily living.

Interviews: structured or unstructured conversations intended to gather information from an individual through a verbal question-and-answer format

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU): a written document detailing the work and fiscal responsibilities of participating parties. Such documents may also be referred to as Service, Resource Sharing, or Governance Agreements. These agreements include details regarding who is providing what services, how much they will cost, who is paying for them, where they will be delivered, and additional information as needed.

Neuropsychological Testing: medical assessment used to examine brain function and identify cognitive disorders. The purpose of these tests is to diagnose localized organic dysfunction and to help determine rehabilitative treatment that may be needed by individuals with brain injuries and related cognitive disabilities.

Norm-referenced Tests: tests in which a person's score is compared to others in a specific reference group.

Observation: the process of watching or listening to an individual's behavior and performance and recording relevant information.

Occupation Specific Certification Tests: assessments given by licensure boards, businesses, apprenticeship programs, and workforce preparation programs (such as community colleges, technical colleges, or workforce development training programs). They measure individual achievement and the ability to perform very specific work or jobs, are often compared to industry standards, and can be used to document the effectiveness of training programs themselves.

Order of Selection: in State Vocational Rehabilitation agencies, rules that help determine eligibility when funding is limited. Federal law requires eligibility for individuals with the most severe disabilities and puts others on waiting lists or denies them services altogether.

Performance Reviews: assessment activities that look at a whole spectrum of what an individual has learned and is more subjective, holistic, and qualitative in nature than testing.

Person-centered Planning: planning processes that focus on an individual's needs and desires and promote self-determination. In transition, person-centered planning focuses on the interests, aptitudes, knowledge, and skills of an individual, not on his or her perceived deficits.

Physical and Functional Capacities Assessments: assessments provided in schools, workforce preparation centers, clinics, rehabilitation facilities, and at work sites to determine how an individual can physically perform in specific situations.

Record reviews: assessment activities that incorporate prior assessment results including records from schools and care providers, as available.

Reliability: a quality that indicates a test provides consistent results over time.

Resource Mapping: a type of environmental scanning that is a useful means of identifying, recording, and disseminating all related resources and services that comprise a service delivery system.

Screening: a process used by lay people to determine whether further diagnostic assessment should be provided by professionals.

Situational Work Assessments: occupational skills and work behaviors that are assessed in real or simulated settings and measure capacities and competencies to perform essential job duties of specific competitive employment positions.

Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD): learning problems that affect an individual's ability to interpret what they see and hear or to link information from different parts of the brain.

Testing: an activity that consists of administering a particular set of questions to an individual to obtain a score.

Transition: the period of time when adolescents are moving into adulthood and is often concerned with planning for postsecondary education or careers. In the workforce environment, it usually encompasses the ages 14 to 25.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI): a sudden physical assault on the head that causes damage to the brain. This injury may be closed or penetrating and the range of severity of a TBI can run from a mild concussion to the extremes of coma or even death.

Validity: the extent to which a test measures what its authors or users claim it measures; specifically, test validity concerns the appropriateness of the inferences that can be made on the basis of test results.

Vocational Aptitudes and Skills Assessments: activities used in schools and workforce preparation programs to measure or determine an individual's ability or potential to learn or perform in order to hold specific jobs or to train for specific careers.

Vocational Interest Assessments: activities used in schools and workforce preparation programs to match an individual's interests, goals, and values to available employment, training, or post-secondary education programs.

Work Accommodations Assessments: activities used to determine the need for adjustments to work sites, schedules, training procedures, etc. to improve a person's ability to do a job.

Work Sampling: a process of using standardized instruments that are used to help assess the job potential of an individual.

Work Tolerance Assessments: physical activities that use a structured process for examining and measuring the physical endurance, strength, motor coordination skills, and emotional capacities of a worker when performing essential job tasks.