

# **Level 7 Diploma in Assessment and Intervention for Dyscalculia and Maths Learning Difficulties**

## **Programme Information (pre-application)**

(including 'top up' / conversion  
programme for level 7 dyslexia assessors)

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## Welcome to the Course

We hope this pre-course information provides you with the information you need to join our training programme in assessing learners for dyscalculia and maths learning difficulties.

## About the British Dyslexia Association (BDA)?

The British Dyslexia Association (BDA) aims to bring about a Dyslexia and Dyscalculia Friendly Society.

Since its creation over 50 years ago the BDA has worked tirelessly to develop a network of national and international support for dyslexic people.

The BDA is the voice of dyslexic people. We aim to influence government and other institutions to promote a dyslexia friendly society that enables dyslexic and dyscalculic people of all ages to thrive and reach their potential.

Our vision is a world where people with dyslexia and dyscalculia can flourish.

Our mission is to change society by removing barriers so that everyone with dyslexia and dyscalculia can reach their full potential in education, in employment and in life.

We raise awareness and educate people to encourage inclusion and inspire change in education and the workplace.

We promote understanding and base our expertise on evidence and research, setting professional standards and influencing policy.

We empower people; as the leading national dyslexia charity, we speak out on behalf of dyslexics and dyscalculics to change society for the better.

Our values are what we stand for, they are embedded into every area of our work and help us make decisions every day. They include:

**Excellence:** We work with our community and each other to continuously improve all that we do and the services we offer.

**Respect:** We are an inclusive organisation where everyone has a voice which is listened to and is valued for the unique skills they bring.

**Team work:** We collaborate and support each other in pursuit of our vision: we are strongest and most effective when we work together.

**Innovation:** We embrace different thinking and encourage everyone to bring their ideas and initiatives, reflecting the diversity of the community we support.

Our campaign areas: The BDA promotes early identification of specific learning difficulties (SpLD) and support in schools to ensure opportunity to learn for dyslexic and dyscalculic learners.

The BDA recognises the co-occurring nature of specific learning difficulties and that about 60% of people with dyslexia may have maths learning difficulties and that about 5% of the population may have dyscalculia.

The training activities of the BDA are a crucial part of our work in all of the above areas. For those within an education setting there is a wide range of training from awareness and identification, classroom support strategies through to specialist teaching and training to become a specialist assessor.

The BDA also sets the gold standard for assessment through its AMBDA award for dyslexia and more recently it's AMBDA award for dyscalculia. This is awarded to specialist teachers who have completed an accredited BDA course at level 7.

## **Current Definition of Developmental Dyscalculia**

Dyscalculia is a specific and persistent difficulty in understanding numbers which can lead to a diverse range of difficulties with mathematics. It will be unexpected in relation to age, level of education and experience and occurs across all ages and abilities.

Mathematics difficulties are best thought of as a continuum, not a distinct category, and they have many causal factors. Dyscalculia falls at one end of the spectrum and will be distinguishable from other maths issues due to the severity of difficulties with number sense, including subitising, symbolic and non-symbolic magnitude comparison, and ordering. It can occur singly but often co-occurs with other specific learning difficulties, mathematics anxiety and medical conditions.

(BDA Committee Jarrett 2019)

## What is the qualification?

The BDA Level 7 Diploma in Assessment and Intervention for Dyscalculia and Maths Learning Difficulties qualification will provide specialist teachers with the expertise and knowledge to carry out formal diagnostic assessments for dyscalculia and maths learning difficulties and to write reports to SASC approved standards.

The awarding body for the qualification is OCN. It comprises four learning units each worth 20 credits. Students completing the full award of 4 units will receive 80 credits, students completing the 'top up' or conversion award from Dyslexia level 7 will be exempt from Unit 1 and receive 60 credits for 3 units.

The qualification has been validated by the BDA's accreditation board, which is an independent body that approves courses from a variety of different universities and course providers who deliver courses to AMBDA standards. The qualification builds on the level 5 course for Dyscalculia and Maths Learning Difficulties Support and Intervention. Specialist teachers will have acquired the knowledge and expertise to informally assess the strengths and needs of learners, to develop teaching programmes for two learners and deliver a total of 20 hours of specialist maths teaching prior to engaging in the level 7 course.

The level 7 qualification should be achieved in 12 – 18 months. Additional extensions can be requested, however these are at the discretion of the Course Leader and incur a cost.

The qualification requires students to complete a 2500-word essay at the beginning of the course and a 5000-word essay at the end. It also requires students to carry out 3 diagnostic assessments and teach their first learner for 10 hours. These tasks constitute 14 assignments.

## Who is the course for?

The BDA Level 7 Diploma in Assessment and Intervention for Dyscalculia and Maths Learning Difficulties is intended for specialist teachers who have

achieved a BDA approved level 5 qualification in specialist teaching of learners with dyscalculia and maths learning difficulties including 20 hours specialist teaching and who wish to further their training to become a specialist assessor for dyscalculia and maths learning difficulties.

It is also for qualified level 7 dyslexia assessors who have completed 20 hours of specialist teaching for learners with maths learning difficulties and who wish to extend their expertise in assessment to include dyscalculia. These students will only be required to complete 3 units worth a total of 60 credits and carry out 2 of the 3 diagnostic assessments.

Applicants with an established history of specialist teaching in maths may also be considered on the basis of individual merit and suitable evidence of their professional practice. This will be at the discretion of the Course Leader.

## **Entry Requirements**

- A level 5 qualification from an BDA ATS accredited programme in supporting learners with dyscalculia and maths learning difficulties with 20 hours of specialist maths teaching and evidence of an established history of maths teaching, equivalent to at least two years.
- A level 5 from a non-accredited BDA provider with 20 hours of specialist maths teaching with examples of informal assessment which has been approved by the course leader and evidence of an established history of maths teaching, equivalent to at least two years.
- Applicants with a level 7 qualification in the assessment of dyslexia will also need to evidence 20 hours of specialist maths teaching, as well as evidence of at least two years maths teaching.

This is a masters level programme and therefore the applicant must be able to produce written assignments at this level using academic language, style and referencing.

A masters level programme also requires the applicant to participate in considerable amount of independent academic reading and research.

The BDA will provide references to some websites and articles, but it is the applicants responsibility to procure the recommended textbooks for themselves, as well as additional academic reading.

They must also speak English fluently and the learners that they work with will also need to speak English fluently.

The applicant will need to procure 3 learners (2 learners for level 7 dyslexia top-up) from associated schools, colleges and workplaces, who have been identified with maths learning difficulties, in order to carry out their diagnostic assessments. These learners will have agreed to being videoed for the purpose of assessment.

The applicant will also need to have access to one learner to deliver 10 hours of specialist teaching and also have access to a range of manipulatives, which are to be used in multi-sensory learning.

The applicant must have good IT skills in order to be able to access the online modules as well as produce typed assignments uploaded to our e-Learning platform.

The applicant must have sufficient time in their timetable to dedicate at least 12 to 15 hours a week to this course.

BDA does not provide assessment tests, the applicant would therefore need to ensure that they have access to the following assessment materials. The student is advised not to purchase these resources before completion of the first assignment. The following tests are advised, however each student will be expected to research and source appropriate tests for their learners, as guided in the first module. Selected tests must be approved by SASC – see <https://sasc.org.uk/assessment-guidance/test-lists/>

- **Wide Range Intelligence Test (WRIT)**

Glutting, J., Adams, W. and Sheslow, D. (2000) Wide Range Intelligence Test (WRIT), Wilmington: Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc.

- **Wide Range Achievement Test 5 (WRAT 5)**

- Tests of Single word reading, spelling, maths and sentence comprehension

- Wilkinson, G. S. and Robertson, G. J. (2017) Wide Range Achievement Test 5 (WRAT 5), Lutz, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc.
- **Feifer Assessment of Mathematics (FAM)**  
Feifer, S. G. and Heddy, K. C. (2016) Feifer Assessment of Mathematics, Lutz, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc.
- **Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing 2 (CTOPP 2)**  
Wagner, R.K., Torgesen, J.K. and Rashotte, C. A. (2013)  
Austin, Texas: Pro-ed.
- **Test of Memory and Learning 2 (TOMAL 2)**  
Reynolds, C.R. and Voress, J.K. (2007) Test of Memory and Learning, 2nd Edition (TOMAL 2), Austin, Texas: Pro-ed.

## Process of Application

Students will need to complete and submit an Application Form prior to booking. Course bookings are made via our website.

This provides us with information about your background and experience and will help us determine whether you are eligible for the course. A reference from your level 5 course provider will also be required, as well as a reference from your place of employment. Once the application has been approved and you have been accepted onto the programme, you will then be able to submit your booking form and make payment.

## The Programme

The academic content of the programme is provided on an e-Learning platform (Coassemble) and comprises 5 modules:

- Module 1: Principles of Assessment?
- Module 2: Carrying out Assessments
- Module 3: Report Writing
- Module 4: Specialist Teaching
- Module 5: Evaluations



Students can progress through these modules at their own pace. There are also a number of informal virtual training sessions lead by one of the tutor team.

You will be required to supplement this material with your own independent reading and research.

## **Assessment of Students' Work**

There are 14 Assignments:

Assignment 1	2500-word essay
Assignments 2,3,4	Assessment of Learner 1 and Diagnostic Assessment Report (DAR 1)
Assignment 5	Teaching Learner 1 for 10 hours
Assignments 6,7,8,9	Assessment of Learner 2 and DAR 2
Assignments 10,11,12	Assessment of Learner 3 and DAR 3
Assignment 13	Professional evaluations and development
Assignment 14	5000-word essay and presentation

You are required to complete Assignment 1, the 2500-word essay within 3 months of starting the course. The standard of your achievement on this assignment will help us determine whether you have the fundamental knowledge of dyscalculia to be able to continue on the course. If you do not succeed at this task you will be asked to withdraw, and a 75% refund will be given.

You will be required to carry out a diagnostic assessment on 3 different learners with video and write up a report to SASC criteria clearly communicating the outcomes of the assessment, analysis of results, impact and recommendations for support. (Dyslexia level 7 top-up students will only be required to do 2 diagnostic assessments).

You will be required to teach your first learner for 10 hours, producing a portfolio of schemes of work, lesson plans and supporting evidence.

You will be required to submit a 5000 word reflective essay at the end of the course.

All tutors on this course will have a level 7 AMBDA dyscalculia, as well as a current APC. Work will be assessed by your personal tutor and moderated by other members of the tutor team. Completed portfolios will be verified by the course leader.

All video evidence and written work including planning and delivery of the assessment sessions and teaching practise will be uploaded to our Elearning platform.

## Teaching Practice

This is a competency assessed programme; supervised teaching is an essential part of the programme.

Students are required to deliver 10 hours of evaluated teaching practice, in addition to the 20 hours that they will have already completed prior to being accepted on the course. You are responsible for procuring a learner from within the age range you normally work, who should be in a mainstream setting and has a range of difficulties with the acquisition of basic numeracy skills and other maths issues but not moderate or global learning difficulties. They must also have had at least one year of uninterrupted schooling for their appropriate age.

This learner, learner 1 will be used for your first diagnostic assessment report, prior to teaching. Students are expected to produce a portfolio of evidence on our e-Learning platform, which will contain documentation and evidence of the teaching practice. This will also include at least two hours of videoed sessions.

## Timeline and duration of course

This course is designed to be completed within 12 – 18 months. Guidance below is based on completion in 12 months.

### **1 – 4 months**

Students will undertake the ELearning modules, virtual sessions and essay. They will select and assess learner 1, Diagnostic Assessment Report, DAR 1.

When the diagnostic report and teaching plans have been approved, students may start teaching this learner.

#### **4 – 8 months:**

Students will assess their second learner DAR2 and continue to teach their first learner.

#### **8 – 12 months:**

Students will assess their third learner DAR 3 and complete the extended essay.

(Dyslexia level 7 top-up students do not have to complete DAR 2 and may complete DAR 3 sooner.)

## Extensions and Deferrals

After the 18 month period, the student may apply for an extension which will be agreed at the Course Leaders discretion. This will incur a cost. Extensions will not be permitted beyond 2 years.

If the student experiences exceptional circumstances which causes them to be signed off work, they may apply for a deferral, providing they can supply relevant medical or other information to support their referral. They will be taken off register, cease to have access to the e-Learning site and the months of deferment will be added to their final expiry date. However, the total period to complete the course from outset is 2 years.

## Technical Equipment Required for the Course

**Computer and Internet access:** You will need a computer (PC, Mac, laptop or other similar device) connected to the Internet and email in order to access the teaching materials and participate in this programme.

**Video Recording Equipment:** You will need access to a digital video camera in order to record your assessment and 2 teaching sessions. High quality webcams, smartphones and tablets properly positioned on a tripod will accomplish the task.

**Online Repository:** In order for our tutors to review your recorded videos and work, you will be provided with access to the Elearning platform where you can download assignments and upload completed work.

## Course Fees

**To find current course costs please visit the BDA website:**  
**[www.bdadyslexia.org.uk](http://www.bdadyslexia.org.uk)**

### Options for Payment:

1. Pay the full cost of the course - You will have access to the course site for 18 months. Payment must be made 8 weeks before your start date.

2. Pay in two instalments:

First instalment will give you access for 3 months Payment must be made 8 weeks before your start date.

Second instalment (to be paid within the first 3 months) will give you access for the remainder of the course.

Additional costs may be charged if you do not achieve a pass for any assignment within the allocated submissions. For example, you will be allowed 3 submissions for DAR 1 report, if you are unsuccessful and need to redo it with a new learner, the additional cost will be £150.

## Will I need to have a DBS Check (or equivalent)?

As a Disclosure and Barring Service Enhanced Disclosure is a requirement for working with children, young people and vulnerable adults in England, the learner you choose to work with for any practical teaching should be someone within your school or workplace, where you will already have a DBS Enhanced Disclosure. If you choose to work with someone from outside that

environment, then you should apply for a separate enhanced DBS check in the setting in which you will be working.

You should allow **at least 6 weeks** to process any DBS application, and this must be in place before any face-to-face work with a learner. For further information please visit: [Gov.uk | Disclosure and Barring](https://www.gov.uk/disclosure-and-barring)

Other countries may have their own procedures for approving the suitability of individuals to work with children, young people and vulnerable adults. The BDA is only authorised to validate the suitability of the academic and education qualifications and teaching experience to participate in the course and therefore it is the responsibility of the school/college/workplace where the student is working to ensure that they are suitable to work with learners.

However, we reserve the right to request this information from you or to terminate a programme where we feel it is not in the interests of the learner to continue. The BDA will not assume responsibility, nor will it accept liability incurred as a result of any participant or learner being engaged in this programme.

## Data Protection

We advise all information regarding a learner to be anonymised before being kept on a personal computer. If you keep information about a student on your personal computer then you must be registered with the ICO – Information Commissioner’s Office.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### **How many hours studying will I need to undertake?**

The awarding body, OCN have awarded 4 units to this course. Each unit is 20 credits and each credit is equivalent to 10 guided learning hours. A guided learning hour is defined as any activity connected to the course such as: lectures, demonstrations, group work, presentations, self-directed learning/reading, research, academic assignments, assessment of learners, teaching. Over the year this would be equivalent to about 15 hours a week.

### **How long do I have to complete the qualification and what happens if I need more time?**

You will have 12 – 18 months to complete. An additional extension may be granted to complete in 24 months. This will incur a cost and no further extensions will be permitted.

### **Do I need to have current teaching experience before enrolling onto the course?**

Your general teaching experience does not have to be immediate, but it does have to be fairly current (within the last 10 years). However, your specialist teaching hours should be within the last 3 years.

### **What happens if my work does not meet the required standard?**

Level 7 requires a high level of accuracy in administering tests, scoring test papers and writing reports. In light of this, we have a graded scale for the number of submissions you are given for each DAR. For DAR 1, we allow 3 submissions. For DAR 2, 2 submissions. DAR 3 should be accurate on first submission with only minor feedback required. If DARs 1 and 2 require more than the permitted number of submissions or level of feedback, you will be asked to start the assignment again from the beginning. This may require you to find new learners to work with and a fee will be incurred.

Work that is not achieved will be moderated by the course leader and you may be asked to leave the course with no accredited learning. There is a refund structure which you may request. You may be able to reapply if you have undertaken appropriate CPD to be able to achieve the course outcomes. Admission will be at the discretion of the course leader.

### **What other documents will I need to refer to?**

You will need to refer to the SASC guidance for dyscalculia in UK and relevant legislation or curriculum for your country (e.g., Students in England should refer to the SEND Code of Practice 0-25, the National Curriculum and the Equality Act 2010).

- <https://sasc.org.uk/Downloads.aspx>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum>

- <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

### **How can I access books and journals for my research?**

You are provided with a reading list which highlights core texts which you will either have to purchase or access. We recommend you join a library (A University library would be best if you have access to one). There are a number of journal articles uploaded onto the course site, the course development team add to this on an ongoing basis, and you can find additional articles through an online search.

- **Wiley Journal subscription offer**  
As a BDA member, you get the option to buy a Wiley Dyslexia Journal subscription at a much-reduced rate, so if you become a member of the BDA at student rate of £25 you can then also buy the Wiley subscription for 12 months for £55 (normally £100+).

### **How can I access assessment materials?**

You will need to procure these personally or through your place of work or seek to borrow them from a library.

### **When can I enrol onto the Level 7 programme?**

You can enrol onto this programme at any time during the year and once accepted you can start reading and wait to be allocated to a start date and the online modules.

### **When will I be allocated a tutor?**

You will be allocated a tutor as soon as the course begins.

### **Are there any additional costs once I have paid for the course?**

There are some additional costs.

- costs to the BDA for additional marking if you do not achieve in the allocated number of submissions. (a list of these is available)
- some essential reading texts for the course, which you may have to purchase if you are unable to borrow them through a library.
- assessment materials which you would need to purchase if you cannot borrow them.
- multisensory teaching resources and you may need to pay for your own photocopying, if you are not attached to an educational institution.



**What age groups would this course enable me to work with as an assessor?**

This would depend on the age group with whom you undertake your assessments; if you assessed school age learners under 16 then this is the age range you would be qualified to assess, if you work with post-16 / adult learners then it would be this age range.

You could do both, but this may entail you having to undertake additional assessment which will incur an additional cost.

**Once I have completed the BDA Level 7 do I need to become a member of the BDA or another affiliated body so that I can assess?**

Upon completion of the qualification and assessing independently you will need to have professional indemnity insurance. You can obtain this through your membership to either Patoss or BDA. The insurance is not part of your membership but being a member allows you to apply for the insurance.

**Will I automatically get an APC when I have completed my level 7 course?**

Once you have achieved your level 7 qualification you can apply for an APC independently. APCs are issued by Patoss, BDA and Dyslexia Action.

**If I do not complete all the modules and assignments, do I get credit for the work that I have completed?**

Unfortunately not. You will be awarded the level 7 diploma if you complete all the required elements. You will not receive a partial award for the elements that you have completed.

## Contact Details

For additional information or any queries please contact:

Email: [l7dip@bdadyslexia.org.uk](mailto:l7dip@bdadyslexia.org.uk)

BDA Professional Level Training team: 0333 405 4565