DARE 2027 Information for Guidance Counsellors / Teachers in relation to applicants with Dyslexia / Significant Literacy Difficulties or Dyscalculia / Significant Numeracy Difficulties

1. Literacy/Numeracy Attainment Scores

In addition to a full psychological assessment, applicants to DARE with a diagnosis of **Dyslexia / Significant Literacy Difficulties** or **Dyscalculia / Significant Numeracy Difficulties** must provide up to date attainment scores, in order to evidence current impact.

Applicants with **Dyslexia / Significant Literacy Difficulties** must submit:

- a **full Psychological Assessment Report** completed by an appropriately qualified psychologist **OR Section D School Statement** AND
- an Educational Impact Statement.

In addition, applicants with Dyslexia/ Significant Literacy Difficulties must also have **two literacy attainment** scores at or below the 10th percentile (SS of 81 or below) from testing carried out on or after **1 February 2025**.

Applicants with **Dyscalculia / Significant Numeracy Difficulties** must submit:

- a **full Psychological Assessment Report** completed by an appropriately qualified psychologist AND
- an Educational Impact Statement.

In addition, applicants with Dyscalculia/ Significant Numeracy Difficulties must have **one numeracy** attainment score at or below the 10th percentile (SS of 81 or below) from testing carried out on or after **1 February 2025**.

The scores of the attainment testing may be presented in one of the following three ways:

1. **Schools:** Attainment scores can be entered into Indicator 6 (Literacy/Numeracy Attainment Scores) by the school using attainment scores from school-based testing carried out on or after 1 February 2025.
2. **Psychologist:** Where the attainment scores are from tests carried out by a suitably qualified psychologist, one of the following must be submitted:
    - A full Psychological Assessment Report which contains relevant attainment scores from testing carried out on or after 1 February 2025 **OR**

- A fully completed **DARE 2027 Literacy/Numeracy Attainment Summary Sheet** or an equivalent summary report from a Psychologist. (This document must be accompanied by a full psychological assessment of any age when posting documentation to DARE)

3. **Combination:** Where a combination of scores from psychologist and school-based testing is being reported, all scores can be entered into Indicator 6 by the school, but this must be accompanied by one of the documents listed in point 2 above.

In all cases, these must have been carried out **on or after 1 February 2025**, and all applicants must submit an Educational Impact Statement (EIS) completed by their school.

Attainments in Literacy: A score at or below the 10th percentile (Standard Score of 81 or below) can be presented in any **TWO** of the following literacy areas to meet DARE criteria:

- Reading accuracy
- Single word reading
- Reading comprehension
- Phonological skills/ Pseudoword Decoding
- Reading speed / fluency
- Spelling
- Writing speed

Attainments in Numeracy: A score at or below the 10th percentile (Standard Score of 81 or below) can be presented in any **ONE** of the following numeracy areas to meet DARE criteria:

- Mathematical reasoning and problem solving
- Mathematical computation
- Mathematical fluency

Please note: Written Expression is no longer acceptable for DARE eligibility under the Dyslexia/Significant Literacy Difficulties category.

Reporting Scores: Attainment scores must be reported as standard scores or percentile points. Descriptive terms and score ranges alone are not sufficient.

2. Educational Impact Criteria

When submitting a Psychological Assessment Report or Section D School Statement, it must be accompanied by an Educational Impact Statement (EIS) completed by the school. As noted above, the attainment scores from school-based testing should be entered into Indicator 6 of the EIS, but this indicator may be left blank where the EIS is accompanied by a document containing attainment scores from tests carried out by a suitably qualified psychologist.

Applicants with **Dyslexia/ Significant Literacy Difficulties must meet Indicator 6**, i.e. two literacy attainment scores at or below the 10th percentile (Standard Score of 81 or below) and **must also meet ONE more indicator** on the EIS to meet the educational impact criteria.

Applicants with **Dyscalculia/ Significant Numeracy Difficulties must meet Indicator 6**, i.e. one numeracy attainment score at or below the 10th percentile (Standard Score of 81 or below) and **must also meet ONE more indicator** on the EIS to meet the educational impact criteria.

3. Qualification of individual(s) carrying out Literacy/Numeracy attainment testing for Dyslexia/ Significant Literacy Difficulties or Dyscalculia/ Significant Numeracy Difficulties

For the purposes of school-based testing, teachers must be competent 'test users' that are familiar with the DARE process and must be suitably qualified. They must also have a thorough knowledge of the DARE scheme and criteria for eligibility.

Suitably qualified individuals include:

- Teachers who are registered with the Teaching Council who have postgraduate qualifications in Special Education Needs or Guidance Counselling recognised by the Department of Education and Skills.
- Teachers who hold a recognised qualification in individual assessment (e.g. the Certificate of Competence in Educational Assessment).

4. DARE Suitable Literacy/Numeracy attainment tests for Dyslexia/ Significant Literacy Difficulties/ and Dyscalculia/ Significant Numeracy Difficulties

- All applicants must be assessed using age-appropriate tests.
- Tests should be properly standardized, with clear evidence of validity and reliability.
- Tests should be up to date and currently in use.
- If schools have a query in relation to the use of these assessment instruments, the school should contact their NEPS Psychologist.
- If the query relates to an aspect of the DARE criteria, please consult the DARE Handbook or contact a member of the DARE Team in the participating colleges (contact details in the DARE Handbook and available on https://accesscollege.ie/
- Detailed information on the Evidence of Disability criteria is also available on http://accesscollege.ie/dare/providing-evidence-of-your-disability/.

Suitable tests for schools-based testing: The following is a list of suitable attainment tests for Dyslexia/ Significant Literacy Difficulties or Dyscalculia/ Significant Numeracy Difficulties. This list corresponds with the list of acceptable tests published by the Department of Education and Skills in Circular **0023/2026** (click link below for the full circular):

https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-education/publications/list-of-assessment-instrumentstests-for-guidance-or-for-additional-and-special-educational-needs-in-post-primary-schools-per-circular-00232026

Scores from the Individually Administered tests ONLY will be accepted.

Where attainment testing is carried out in schools by a suitably qualified teacher for the purposes of DARE, one (or more) of the following tests must be used.

Achievement Tests: Individually Administered Tests

Literacy: reading, spelling, language awareness/processing and reading comprehension

The items in the list below assess a range of literacy skills including phonology, reading accuracy, oral-word reading, silent-passage reading, reading fluency, reading comprehension, reading rate or speed, listening comprehension, spelling and handwriting.

Name and date of publication	Type	Description	Age range	Norms	Sourced from	Minimum Qualifications required for test administration
Adult Reading Test, Second Edition (ART-2), 2016	Individual	Adult reading test	16 years +	UK norms	Pearson Clinical Assessment	Specialist training e.g. SEN / guidance counsellor
Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP-2), 2 Edition, 2013	Individual	Used to assess phonological awareness, phonological memory and rapid naming	4 to 24 years 11 months	UK norms	Pearson Clinical Assessment	Specialist training e.g. SEN / guidance counsellor
Detailed Assessment of Speed of Handwriting, Second Edition, (DASH-2) 2024	Individual	Speed and automaticity of handwriting across copying, alphabet writing and extended writing tasks.	8 to 25 years	UK and Australian/ New Zealand norms	Pearson Clinical Assessment	Teacher
Diagnostic Reading Analysis (DRA 3) 3rd Edition, 2019	Individual; Diagnostic Profiler CD Rom Available	Oral reading test, including initial listening passage plus reading accuracy, comprehension and speed, designed for less able readers	6.09 to 16.08	UK norms	Outside The Box Learning Resources	Teacher

Name and date of publication	Type	Description	Age range	Norms	Sourced from	Minimum Qualifications required for test administration
Expressive Vocabulary Test, 3rd edition, 2018	Individual	A test of expressive vocabulary and word retrieval for Standard English with 190 items and 2 forms	2:6 to 90+	UK norms	Pearson Clinical Assessment	Specialist training e.g. SEN / guidance counsellor
Lucid Exact, 2009 and 2025	Individual; digital only	Time efficient assessment of speeded word recognition, reading comprehension, reading speed, spelling, handwriting speed and typing speed	11 to 24	UK norms	GL Assessment	Teacher
OWLS II: LC/OE and RC/WE Oral and Written Language Scales, 2nd edition, 2012	Individual	Provides assessment of receptive and expressive language with no reading or written responses required	LC/OE – 3 to 21:11; RC/WE – 5 to 21:11	UK norms	Western Psychological Service (WPS)	Specialist training e.g. SEN / guidance counsellor
Phonological Assessment Battery: Second Edition Primary (PhAB2 Primary) 2014	Individual	A battery of six standardised tests measuring phonological awareness skills. Assessment for pupils with low scores in any phonics screening or literacy test. Suitable for EAL students	5 - 11	UK norms	GL Assessment	Teacher
SPaRCS Test	Individual or group	A group of tests that are designed to assess spelling, processing speed and reading comprehension speed	13 -18	Irish and UK norms	Education Elephant	Teacher
Tests of Dyslexia Screener (TOD-S)	Individual	A group of tests to assess receptive vocabulary knowledge, letter/word recognition and question reading fluency	5 - 89	USA norms	Western Psychological Services (WPS)	Specialist training e.g. SEN/ Guidance counsellor

Name and date of publication	Type	Description	Age range	Norms	Sourced from	Minimum Qualifications required for test administration
Test of Word Reading Efficiency- Second edition (TOWRE-2)	Individual	Sight word reading efficiency and phonemic decoding efficency	6 to 24	USA norms	Pro-Ed Inc	Teacher
Test of Written Spelling, Sixth Edition (TWS-6)	Individual	Latter pattern knowledge, spelling accuracy, word spelling and application of spelling rule	6 to 18	USA norms	Pro-Ed Inc	Teacher
Wechsler Individual Achievement Test WIAT-III UK Edition for teachers, 2018	Individual (Group – spelling only)	Provides normed assessment in untimed single word accuracy, reading comprehension, reading speed and single word spelling. Battery of five subtests to test key aspects of literacy	4 to 25.11	UK norms	Outside The Box Learning Resources	Teacher
Wide Range Achievement Test – 5th edition, (WRAT-5) 2018	Individual or Group	WRAT-5 measures and monitors fundamental word reading, spelling and math skills and sentence comprehension. It includes updated norms and revised subtests. **Uses American spelling**	5 to 94	US norms	Pearson Clinical Assessment	Specialist training e.g. SEN / guidance counsellor
Woodcock Reading Mastery Test 3rd Edition, 2011	Individual	Identifies specific strengths and weaknesses to plan targeted remediation; nine subtests: phonological awareness, letter and word identification, rapid naming, oral fluency, word attack, and listening, word and passage comprehension. **Uses American spelling**	4:06-79:11	US norms	Pearson Clinical Assessment	Specialist training e.g. SEN / guidance counsellor

Name and date of publication	Type	Description	Age range	Norms	Sourced from	Minimum Qualifications required for test administration
Woodcock Johnson – IV Tests of Achievement Form C / Brief Battery, 2014 Woodcock Johnson V (WJ V, digital test) published 2025	Individual	Battery of eleven subtests: letter-word identification, sentence-reading fluency, passage comprehension, word attack, oral-reading spelling, sentence writing fluency, writing samples, calculation, applied problems and maths facts fluency. There is a UK/Ireland Adaptation of this test available WJV (digital) access to digital tests of writing, language and math. Eight new tests including Reading Fluency, Reading Comprehension, Basic Reading, Maths Calculation, Spelling, Maths Problem Solving, Written Expression & Oral Expression.	4 - 90+ 4-90+	US norms US, post pandemic norms	Riverside Insights Education Elephant Riverside Insights	Specialist training e.g. SEN / guidance counsellor Specialist training e.g. SEN / guidance counsellor
York Assessment of Reading Comprehension, Passage Reading, Secondary, 2010	Individual	Uses fiction and non-fiction passages to measure developing reading comprehension skills (support website available here	11 to 16	UK norms	GL Assessment	Specialist training eg SEN / guidance counsellor

Suitable Numeracy Attainment Tests for Guidance Counsellors / Teachers Testing:

Mathematical reasoning and problem solving			
Test	**Subtest**	**Age range**	**Norms**
Woodcock-Johnson-4 Tests of Achievement (WJ4 – ACH)	Applied problems or Quantitative reasoning	2-90	US population
Wechsler Individual Achievement Test – Third UK Edition (WIAT-III UK)	Maths problem solving	4-25:11	UK population
Woodcock Johnson V (WJ V, digital test) published 2025	Math Problem Identification	4-90+	US normed, 2
Mathematical computation			
Test	**Subtest**	**Age range**	**Norms**
Woodcock-Johnson-4 Tests of Achievement (WJ4 – ACH)	Calculation	2-90	US population
Wechsler Individual Achievement Test – Third UK Edition (WIAT-III UK)	Numeracy	4-25:11	UK population
Mathematics Competency Test		11-adult	UK
Wide Range Achievement Test 5 (WRAT5)	Math computation	5-94	US population
Woodcock Johnson V (WJ V, digital test) published 2025	Number Sense	4-90+	US normed
Mathematical fluency			
Test	**Subtest**	**Age range**	**Norms**
Woodcock-Johnson-4 Tests of Achievement (WJ4 – ACH)	Math fluency	2-90	US population
Wechsler Individual Achievement Test – Third UK Edition (WIAT-III UK)	Maths Fluency (composite score only)	4-25:11	UK population