

Appendix A - Diagnostic Assessment Guidelines

KEY PRINCIPLES FOR WORKING WITH INDIGENOUS STUDENTS

To maintain high quality professional health services in schools, the following key principles apply to external practitioners. Note: these principles are based on the APS guidelines.

Element	Principle governing working with Indigenous students with disability
Principle 1	Psychological assessment of culturally and linguistically diverse students requires careful selection of testing instruments and methods of assessment, as well as careful consideration and interpretation of the information generated in the assessment process, to minimise any potential bias or misinterpretation of assessment information.
Principle 2	It is recommended that practitioners compare only those students who have similar cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
Principle 3	In respect to Indigenous students who speak English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EAL/D), it is not appropriate to use testing instruments with a verbal component. Using a verbal test with those students may lead to an under-representation of abilities.
Principle 4	When used in conjunction with careful consideration of the cultural and linguistic factors, standardised tests can positively reduce subjectivity in decision making within the educational context when considered alongside qualitative information about the student. Assessment results can provide valuable information to assist in programming and developing educational goals for the student.
Principle 5	The traditional adaptive behaviour scales are not used for remote Indigenous students in Northern Territory Government schools. Many of the questions are inappropriate in an Indigenous cross-cultural context.
Principle 6	A qualitative framework is used to assess adaptive behaviour.
Principle 7	An assessment of adaptive behaviour requires obtaining information from a range of sources including family and school contexts. Consider the student's age and expected developmental milestones compared with individuals from a similar cultural and linguistic background.