



ADVANCED ASSESSMENTS LTD

*Expert Witnesses &
Psychologists*



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Page | 0

Expert Witness Services

Services for Criminal Law Professionals

Advanced Assessments Limited

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Table of Contents

Who we are and what we do	2
Forensic assessments	3
Assessment of criminal responsibility	4
Offender rehabilitation assessments	5
Clinical assessments	7
Psychiatric assessments	9

Who we are and what we do

We deliver a range of expert witness services for legal professionals. Expert witness services are provided by us in conjunction with a number of leading specialists. We draw on professionals from a wide range of disciplines, including the areas of psychology, psychiatry and general medicine. Our experts are rigorously vetted and assessed.

We work across all areas of criminal law including offences against the person, violent crime, sexual offences, fraud and deception and offences relating to drugs, public order offences, falsification, forgery, counterfeiting, theft, handling stolen goods, non-fatal offences against the person, homicide and related offences.

Our high quality services are specifically designed to meet the needs of publically-funded clients.

We are fully regulated by the General Medical Council, the Health Care Professions Council, the British Psychological Society and the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales.

To find out how we can help, please call Dr Bernard Horsford or Mr Ali Khan on 0845 130 5712 or e-mail me at experts@advancedassessments.co.uk

Forensic Assessments

We have a wealth of experience in working in the areas of forensic psychology, forensic medicine and forensic accounting. We produce timely psychological assessment reports within five days of seeing your client. We are often able to arrange an assessment on the same day that we receive formal confirmation of funding.

We have extensive knowledge of psychological factors in criminal behaviour and produce robust medico-legal reports.

Our multi-cultural, multi-disciplinary team of expert witnesses provides reports on a number of areas including:

- Risk assessments
- Pre-sentencing reports
- Recommendations for parole
- Suitability for progression or release
- Neuropsychological assessment
- Fraud
- Criminal responsibility
- Suggestibility
- Personality profiling
- Fitness to stand trial
- Fitness to plead
- Ability to consent

As far as forensic accounting is concerned, we are able to deal with the most complex money laundering and fraud cases. Experienced chartered accountants carefully examine the evidence and present accessible reports for the court. Particular areas of expertise are:

- Theft
- Misappropriation
- False accounting
- Asset tracing
- Income tracking
- Proceeds of crime confiscation orders
- Fraud
- Credit card fraud
- Tax/subsidy fraud
- Customs and Excise/VAT fraud
- Benefits fraud

Assessment of Criminal Responsibility

We provide invaluable information to courts in criminal proceedings. Our expert witness psychologists, psychiatrists and medical practitioners have extensive experience in preparing expert reports for courts — both for the prosecution and defence. Whether it is an assessment of a client's competence to stand trial or an evaluation of underlying psychological disorders, our psychologists are able to communicate their findings in a manner accessible to the court and jury. We stand above other expert witness practices in that our Managing Director is both medically and legally trained.

We can offer a wide range of assessments both prior to and post conviction including:

- False confessions and assessment of suggestibility in police interviews
- Fitness to plead (including intellectual ability)
- Suggestibility
- Management of sexual offenders in the community
- Advice on the detection and management of psychiatric disorders by the police and prison services
- Criminal responsibility and compliance in people with learning disability
- The need for an appropriate adult
- Defences of automatism
- Determining whether the offender had the intellectual ability to understand the nature and quality of their act
- Determining whether the victim had the intellectual capacity to consent (particularly in rape and fraud cases)
- Strength of eye witness testimony
- Assessment and diagnosis of psychopathy
- Levels of depression, anxiety, social integration and skills, trauma, past events and other underlying psychopathology and psychological distress
- The tendency to be influenced by others and level of vulnerability
- IQ, fitness to plead, capacity to understand proceedings, capacity to predict consequences, need for involvement of appropriate adult
- Neuropsychological assessments
- False memory syndrome
- Witness reliability
- Analysis of ABE interviews

Assessments for Sentencing

Judges rely on our reports for sentencing. We are able to ensure that all the relevant facts are before the court when considering the best method of disposal of the case.

Psychological assessments in these cases often address issues of:

- Offender risk assessment, including sexual offenders and violent offences
- Capacity for change
- Risk assessments of the likelihood of further offending
- The effect of custodial sentence on vulnerable personalities, with particular reference to suicide risks and physical health
- Effects on the offending behaviour: what is normal behaviour?
- Assessment of trauma victims
- Assessment of past psychological trauma on the offender
- Assessment of the individual's capacity to change behaviour
- Reviews of other psychological or medical reports
- Personality assessments
- Pre-sentencing reports
- Assessing the suitability of offender treatment programmes
- Selecting sex offender and violent offender treatment programmes

Risk Assessments

We carry out offender risk assessments; they are typically based on a review of a number of sources of information including:

- (a) A detailed clinical interview
- (b) Psychometric testing
- (c) An interview with the prison officers and family members
- (d) A review of the pre-sentence report
- (e) A review of medical records
- (f) A review of the indictment

Personality assessment

Personality is assessed for psychopathology (e.g. depression, anxiety, and aggression). A comprehensive assessment of psychopathology is carried out and the assessment includes the respondent's approach to the test, including faking good or bad, exaggeration, or defensiveness. There are clinical scales that correspond to psychiatric diagnostic categories, and treatment consideration scales that assess factors that may relate to the treatment of clinical disorders or other risk factors, but which are not captured in psychiatric diagnoses (e.g. suicidal thoughts). Finally, the assessment includes interpersonal scales, which provide indicators of interpersonal dimensions of personality functioning.

Intellectual assessment

Clients also complete an assessment of their cognitive skills. The results are used to assess whether there is any intellectual or cognitive impairments.

Assessment of current thinking style

Assessment of the current thinking style determines whether the individual has come to terms with the seriousness of the offences. This information is gained in part from the clinical interview.

An assessment of engagement in high risk and reckless behaviour is undertaken by using the STATIC-99 test designed to estimate the probability of reoffending. Other assessment techniques may also be used to identify additional important risk factors.

The psychometric test is used to predict whether the defendant is likely to respond to, or reject, treatment.

Clinical Assessments

An assessment is most commonly carried out for clinical and therapeutic purposes to establish a diagnosis and identify the individual's problems.

Our assessments cover the whole spectrum of adult psychopathology, developmental disorders, anxiety, affective disorders (depression) and organic mental disorders. Disorders, including pervasive developmental disorders (PDD) such as autistic spectrum disorders, attention and arousal problems, are comprehensively assessed.

We have specialists in neuropsychological assessments of neurological and neuropsychiatric disorders, such as epilepsy, head injury, strokes (CVA), memory problems and brain tumours. Our psychological diagnostic assessments include neuropsychological assessments of psychiatric, neuropsychiatric, neurological and neuropsychological problems. Our neuropsychologists use a specialised set of psychometric tools to assess functioning following acquired brain injury; these typically assess memory, personality and intellectual functions. These issues are often key in criminal cases.

We also assess psychosomatic problems such as psychological problems associated with physical illnesses, including high blood pressure and the impact this can have on criminal responsibility and fitness to plead.

We carry out assessments and interventions with people who have more severe and enduring mental health problems, including psychosis, personality and interpersonal difficulties, depression, anxiety, chronic fatigue syndrome and substance misuse. A number of our cases focus on violence, sexual violence, risk assessment, personality disorders and sexual deviations.

Psychiatric Assessments

Our psychiatric assessments are carried out by very experienced psychiatrists. They are often used in making a diagnosis and recommending ongoing support. Our psychiatric assessments are often requested in criminal cases.

The assessment includes social and biographical information, direct observations and data from specific psychological tests. It is typically carried out by a psychiatrist. It is often required in cases where insanity is pleaded by the defendant. However, it can also arise in cases where the court is concerned about the mental health of the defendant and where the court contemplates a Hospital Order or Mental Health Act issues arise.