

Preparing for Your ADHD Assessment

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What to Expect During the Assessment

Duration: 1.5 to 3 hours (usually in two sessions)

Format: Typically conducted online via video call or sometimes in-person

Assessor: A psychiatrist or specialist ADHD clinician

Structure: Detailed interview covering your childhood, current symptoms, relationships, work/study, and daily functioning

What They'll Ask About

Childhood & Developmental History: Early signs, school performance, behaviour as a child, family history

Current Symptoms: How ADHD impacts your focus, organisation, time management, and relationships

Work & Study: Challenges at work or school, how you manage deadlines and tasks

Relationships: How symptoms affect your personal and professional relationships

Daily Life: Sleep, exercise, routines, coping strategies you've developed

What to Bring/Prepare

- Symptom diary (2-4 weeks of notes on your ADHD symptoms)
- Childhood information (early school reports, family comments about behaviour)
- School reports or teacher feedback (if available from your records)
- Current medication list and medical history
- Contact details of someone who knew you well as a child (optional but helpful)
- List of work/study challenges you experience

Don't Have School Reports? That's OK.

Many adults don't have access to childhood records. This **will not** prevent your assessment. The clinician can work with your own recollections and family history. If you remember key details (struggling with focus in school, being restless in class, difficulty with organisation), write these down. Your lived experience is more important than old documents.

On the Day: Tips for Success

- Hydrate well — dehydration affects focus and mood
- Choose a quiet, distraction-free space for your video call
- Test your tech (camera, microphone, internet) 15 minutes before
- Be honest about your struggles — clinicians are not judging you
- Take breaks if you feel overwhelmed (assessors are used to this)

- Bring notes or symptom diary to refer to during conversation
- Allow extra time to find your location if attending in-person

After the Assessment: What Happens Next

Report: You'll typically receive a detailed assessment report within 2-4 weeks. This document summarises findings and recommendations.

Diagnosis: The report will state whether ADHD has been diagnosed, or if other conditions better explain symptoms.

Medication Discussion: If diagnosed and if appropriate, the clinician will discuss medication options (typically stimulants like methylphenidate or non-stimulants). You do not have to take medication; therapy and workplace/lifestyle adjustments are also valid options.

Shared Care: If you choose medication, your GP will usually manage ongoing prescriptions and monitoring (called 'shared care'). Your assessment provider will coordinate this.

Support & Referrals: Depending on the outcome, you may be referred to ADHD coaching, therapy, or specialist support.