

Key specifiers when diagnosing an individual with an Autism Spectrum Condition are:

[1]

- Challenges in social communication and interaction
- Repetitive and restrictive behaviour
- Sensory processing differences
- Meltdowns and extreme anxiety
- Specific and focused hobbies and interests

Autism is a Spectrum Condition that affects different people in a multitude of ways including social interactions, repetitive behaviours and language skills.

Autism Spectrum Conditions can be diagnosed using a variety of assessment frameworks including ADOS, DISCO and ADI-R.

[2] [4] [5]

## DISCO

(Diagnostic Interview for Social and Communication Disorders framework)

DISCO is a semi-structured interview type of assessment used in conjunction with psychological testing that considers an array of information about the individual including:

- Background (social and personal)
- Medical and family history
- Life development (from birth)

When conducting a DISCO assessment, other conditions may be highlighted by the diagnostician including ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and dyspraxia, which could lead to further assessments.

[2] [3]

## ADOS

(Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule)

The ADOS method of diagnosis uses an assessment based structure where individuals are tested predominantly on their ability to:

- Interact socially (through conversation and body language activities)
- Use materials and objects imaginatively (telling stories using everyday items)

When using the ADOS method, diagnosticians look at current behaviour, skills and how the individual reacts in the present moment.

[2] [6]

## ADI-R

(Autism Diagnosis Interview - Revised)

An ADI-R is a type of assessment conducted as an interview style test under traditional clinical (controlled and predetermined) conditions.

It focusses on identifying untypical patterns in three main areas of an individual:

- Qualities of reciprocal and social interaction
- Communication and language
- Restricted and repetitive interests and stereotypical behaviours

### References

[1] KEY SPECIFIERS: Autism.org.uk. 2021. What is autism. [online] Available at: <<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/what-is-autism>> [Accessed 4 May 2021]. | [2] DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA LIST: Autism.org.uk. 2020. Diagnostic criteria - a guide for all audiences. [online] Available at: <<https://www.autism.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/topics/diagnosis/diagnostic-criteria/all-audiences>> [Accessed 10 June 2021]. | [3] ADOS: Applied Behavior Analysis Programs Guide. 2021. What is the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule?. [online] Available at: <<https://www.appliedbehavioranalysisprograms.com/faq/what-is-the-autism-diagnostic-observation-schedule/>> [Accessed 8 June 2021]. | [4] DISCO: Twinkl.co.uk. 2021. DISCO. [online] Available at: <<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/teaching-wiki/disco-assessment>> [Accessed 5 May 2021]. | [5] DISCO: Autism.org.uk. 2021. DISCO. [online] Available at: <<https://www.autism.org.uk/what-we-do/diagnosticservices/disco>> [Accessed 6 May 2021]. | [6] ADI-R: Verywell Health. 2020. ADI-R. [online] Available at: <<https://www.verywellhealth.com/adi-r-test-use-in-autism-diagnosis-260241>> [Accessed 4 June 2021]. |