

Your ADHD Assessment Checklist for Adults



For many adults, the question does not begin with obvious hyperactivity. It may begin with a pattern: missed deadlines despite genuine effort, a busy mind that will not settle, bills or messages left unanswered, or a long history of being described as capable but inconsistent. An [ADHD assessment](#) checklist adults can use may help organise these observations before speaking with a qualified clinician. It cannot confirm ADHD on its own, but it can make the next conversation clearer.

ADHD is a neurodevelopmental condition. In adults, its effects can be shaped by work demands, parenting, relationships, health, sleep and the strategies a person has developed over time. A careful assessment considers the full picture rather than relying on a short online quiz or a single difficult period.

What an adult ADHD assessment is designed to clarify

A [comprehensive assessment](#) explores whether a person's current concerns are consistent with ADHD, whether similar patterns were present in childhood, and whether the difficulties occur across more than one part of life. It also considers the degree to which those difficulties affect daily functioning.

This matters because concentration problems, restlessness, forgetfulness and emotional strain can have several possible explanations. Anxiety, depression, trauma, sleep disorders, substance use, chronic stress, learning differences, autism and some medical conditions can overlap with, co-occur with, or resemble aspects of ADHD. The purpose of assessment is not to fit every concern into one label. It is to develop an accurate, clinically useful understanding of what is happening.

For some adults, an assessment provides language for longstanding experiences. For others, it identifies different or additional factors that need attention. Both outcomes can support more appropriate care planning.

ADHD assessment checklist for adults: what to note

Use the following prompts to record examples, not simply yes or no answers. Specific situations are more helpful than broad statements such as "I cannot focus". Consider when the pattern started, how often it occurs, and what effect it has at home, work, study or in relationships.

Attention and organisation

You may wish to note whether you often lose track of conversations, written instructions or tasks that require sustained mental effort. Consider whether you make avoidable errors when rushing, put off administrative tasks, misplace everyday essentials, or move between jobs without completing them.

Organisation can be affected even when someone appears highly productive. Some adults rely on intense last-minute effort, multiple reminders, detailed systems or support from others to meet responsibilities. Record the effort involved in keeping things on track, as well as the occasions when those systems break down.

Restlessness and impulsivity

Adult hyperactivity may be internal rather than visibly physical. You might notice a persistent sense of being driven, difficulty relaxing, frequent fidgeting, talking more than intended, or taking on too much at once.

Impulsivity may show up as interrupting, making rapid decisions, spending without enough consideration, reacting quickly in conflict, or changing plans before weighing the practical consequences. These behaviours are not specific to ADHD, so context and history matter.

Executive function in daily life

Executive functions are the mental processes involved in starting, planning, prioritising, shifting attention and following through. Useful examples include difficulty estimating how long a task will take, arriving late despite intending to leave on time, becoming stuck when a task has several steps, or feeling overwhelmed by routine paperwork.

It can also help to document variability. Some people can focus deeply on a highly interesting task but struggle to begin a routine one. This pattern may be relevant, although strong focus on preferred activities alone does not establish ADHD.

Emotional regulation and relationships

Many adults seeking assessment describe frustration that rises quickly, difficulty recovering after criticism, or feeling overwhelmed when several demands arrive at once. These experiences deserve discussion, but they are not [diagnostic criteria](#) by themselves.

Think about patterns in close relationships, workplaces and group settings. For example, do you forget commitments, speak before others have finished, avoid tasks that feel mentally demanding, or become distressed by repeated disorganisation? Include strengths as well. Creativity, energy, problem-solving and strong engagement with areas of interest are part of a person's profile, not separate from it.

Childhood history

ADHD begins in childhood, even if it was not recognised at the time. Before an appointment, gather what you can about early school reports, comments about distractibility or incomplete work, behavioural observations, learning support, and family recollections.

Not everyone has access to records, and adults should not assume that a lack of paperwork rules out assessment. A clinician can discuss alternative ways of building a [developmental history](#). However, remembering when difficulties first emerged, and whether they occurred in more than one setting, is valuable information.

Prepare practical information, not a self-diagnosis

A checklist is most useful when it becomes a concise record you can bring to an appointment. Write down a few real examples for each area that concerns you. Include the settings where they occur, the impact on your responsibilities, and any approaches you have already tried.

It may also be useful to list current medications, relevant [medical history](#), mental health history, sleep patterns, alcohol or other substance use, and major life stressors. If a partner, parent or sibling is able and comfortable to contribute observations, their perspective may add useful context, particularly about childhood. Their account is one part of the process, not a replacement for your own experience.

If you have previously completed screening questionnaires, take them along, but treat them as [screening tools](#) only. They can indicate that further discussion may be worthwhile; they cannot provide a formal diagnosis or distinguish ADHD from every other possible cause of similar symptoms.

What happens in a comprehensive assessment

The exact process depends on the clinician and the referral question. It commonly involves a [detailed clinical interview](#), structured ADHD measures, a developmental and health history, and consideration of functioning across settings. The clinician may review school reports or other supporting documents and may seek collateral information with your consent.

Assessment often includes exploration of co-occurring conditions. This is not a detour from the ADHD question. It is necessary for a treatment plan that accounts for the whole person. Someone may have ADHD and anxiety, for example, or concentration difficulties primarily related to disrupted sleep, depression or prolonged stress.

A qualified clinician should explain what information is needed, the limits of the assessment, and what the findings mean in practical terms. Where ADHD is identified, recommendations may include psychological therapy, behavioural strategies, workplace or study adjustments, further medical review, or referral to an appropriate medical practitioner to discuss medication options. The right pathway depends on the person's needs, goals and health history.

Accessing assessment in Australia

Adults can discuss concerns with their GP, who may consider relevant physical health factors, provide a referral where appropriate, and help coordinate care. A referral and eligible Mental Health Care Plan may support access to [Medicare rebates](#) for relevant psychological services, subject to current requirements and the service provided. It is sensible to confirm eligibility, fees and appointment arrangements before booking.

Behavioural Neurotherapy Clinic provides in-person appointments in Doncaster and [telehealth consultations](#) for adults across Australia. An initial discussion can help clarify whether a [comprehensive ADHD assessment](#), therapy, another form of assessment, or liaison with your GP or other treating practitioner is the most appropriate next step.

There is no need to have every answer before making an appointment. A thoughtful record of your experiences, questions and priorities gives the [assessment process](#) a useful starting point - and allows the conversation to focus on care that fits your circumstances.

For more information

[Call \(03\) 9848 9100](tel:0398489100)

Published: 14/09/2026 and updated on: 17/10/2026 by Dr Jacques Duff-PhD; BA Psych; Grad Dip Applied Psychology; FANSA; Clinical Neuroscientist