

# The English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA)

## Cognitive Assessment

## Cognition and its main domains

Cognition is the mental action or process of acquiring, understanding and using knowledge through thinking, experience and senses.

- Learning and memory
- Visuospatial and motor function
- Language
- Executive functioning
- Social cognition/emotions
- Attention/concentration

## Cognitive Assessments

	Wave								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Self-rated memory	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Orientation in time	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Immediate and delayed memory	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Prospective memory	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Word-finding (verbal fluency)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	
Letter cancellation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Backwards counting							✓	✓	✓
Serial 7s							✓	✓	✓
Object naming							✓	✓	✓
Numerical ability	✓			✓		[✓]	[✓]	[✓]	[✓]
Literacy		✓			✓	[✓]	[✓]	[✓]	[✓]
Interviewer's assessment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Proxy's assessment		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Cells in square brackets [✓] - only collected/assessed for refreshment sample or those who had not undertaken previously.

## Memory

- Memory can be defined as the storage of learned information for retrieval and potential future use. Memory represents the ability to recall, information, personal experiences and procedures (skills and habits).
- ELSA assesses respondents' memory using verbal learning tests, testing of orientation in time, prospective memory tests, as well as a subjective evaluation

## Memory tests

- Word list: Participants are asked to remember ten common words, both immediately and after a short delay.
- Orientation in time: Participants are asked questions about the interview's date.
- Prospective task: Participants are asked to remember to perform a specific task at a specific time.
- Subjective evaluation

## Harmonised Cognitive Assessment Protocol (HCAP)

- Study to assess dementia and mild cognitive impairment using a harmonised protocol
- The HCAP ELSA sub-study was carried out in 2018, in a stratified sub-sample of 1273 adults aged 65 and older
- Extensive battery of neuropsychology tests, including 1-hour clinical assessment

## ELSA HCAP tests

### Respondents

- Mini mental state exam
- Word list (immediate/delayed)
- Retrieval fluency
- Letter cancellation
- Backwards counting
- 10/66 questions
- Story memory
- Word list recognition
- Constructional praxis
- Logical memory – recognition
- Raven's matrices
- Trail making
- Smell test
- Depressive symptoms

### Informants

- Informant Questionnaire on Cognitive Decline in the Elderly
- Blessed Dementia Rating Scale (Part 1 and 2)
- HRS Activities Questionnaire
- Community Screening Instrument for Dementia (CSI-D)
- 10/66 Informant questionnaire

## Useful Resources

<https://www.elsa-project.ac.uk/training-resources>

- Overview of ELSA
- Overview of all areas of study and measures by wave
- How to access the data
- HCAP Documentation (sample design, weighting, and questionnaires)

<https://www.elsa-project.ac.uk/hcap>