

Adult Social Care Outcomes Toolkit (ASCOT) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Version 1.0

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General Information

What is ASCOT?

ASCOT stands for the Adult Social Care Outcomes Toolkit. ASCOT is a suite of instruments designed to measure social care-related quality of life (SCRQoL), i.e. the quality of life that can be attributed to the interventions or actions of social care. ASCOT is not a measure of general quality of life. It specifically measures peoples' quality of life defined as those aspects (domains) that can be affected by social care services (e.g. homecare, day centres, residential care).

Which measure should I use?

The ASCOT is a suite of measures designed for different groups of people:

- Adults with care needs accessing social care services (**ASCOT**)
- Carers (family/friends who support someone, unpaid) (**ASCOT-Carer**)
- Adult social care workforce, including care workers, social workers, nurses etc. (**ASCOT-Workforce**)

There are also versions designed for different methods of data collection:

- Questionnaires for use in surveys of adults with care needs (**ASCOT-SCT4**), carers (**ASCOT-Carer SCT4**) or workforce (**ASCOT-Workforce**).
- Interviews for adults with care and support needs (**ASCOT-INT4**) and carers (**ASCOT-Carer INT4**) to collect data on the impact/effect of social care services on peoples' SCRQoL.

Many adults using social care services struggle with structured surveys or interviews. There are adapted versions of **ASCOT** designed to support research involvement:

- Mixed methods version for data collection in care homes (**ASCOT-CH4**).
In addition to ASCOT-CH4, there is an 'add on' module (**ASCOT-CH4-HD**) to also collect data on health measures of (1) anxiety and low mood and (2) pain.
- Easy-to-read self-report versions for adults with learning disabilities (**ASCOT-ER**) or older people (**ASCOT-ER-OP**).
- Proxy-report versions for completion by a relative, friend or care worker, when someone is unable to self-report (**ASCOT-Proxy**).

ASCOT can also be used in **care planning**. For more information, please watch [this video](#).

To select the most suitable version for your study or service, please consider **for/from whom** you want to collect data and **how** you will collect data.

How has ASCOT been developed?

ASCOT has been developed over a series of research projects over 20 years. The development work included creating the questionnaires and developing preference weights, which allows

use of ASCOT in economic evaluations. Some of this work is described in the guidance for each of the ASCOT measures.

Is there any guidance available?

Yes. Most ASCOT instruments have an accompanying guidance document. These are available to view on our website.

Who owns the copyright and Intellectual Property to ASCOT?

University of Kent is the copyright and Intellectual Property holder.

Training and Support

Do I need training before I use ASCOT (excluding ASCOT-CH4)?

No. If you would like additional training or support, please see '**What support is available?**' below.

Do I need training before I use ASCOT-CH4?

Yes. Please see the ASCOT-CH4 tool page for further information.

What support is available?

ASCOT is supported by a network of academics based at the University of Kent and other Universities. We are not funded on an ongoing basis to provide general advice and support for ASCOT. However, we provide information on our website and in the guidance for each measure.

We may be able to work with organisations (e.g. care providers, local authorities) to provide training, advice and support on a consultancy basis.

If you would like to explore this option, please contact Dr Stacey Rand (s.e.rand@kent.ac.uk) about your requirements. Please include **ASCOT consultancy** in the subject line of your email.

Applying for a licence to use ASCOT

Do I need to apply for a licence to use ASCOT?

Yes. A license is required for any use of ASCOT. The license will give you permission to use ASCOT for the purpose you set out in your application.

For further detail and to obtain a license, please refer to the relevant pages on the website. The registration forms gather information on the intended use of ASCOT. This information is used to prepare the licence for permission to use ASCOT. It is important that this information is accurate and correct.

I am a PhD/master's student. Do I still need have to apply for a licence to use ASCOT?

Yes, anyone wishing to use ASCOT must be licensed to use it.

Do I have to agree to any conditions when using ASCOT?

Yes. Terms and conditions (T&Cs) are part of the registration process. You will be required to agree to them when completing the online form.

The person completing the form must agree the T&Cs on behalf of their organisation and/or project team. They must ensure that they have the authority to do so. If they do not have the authority to agree the T&Cs on behalf of their organisation and project team, they must seek a person in their organisation who does have authority to agree the T&Cs. The form includes questions about the name and job title of this authorised person.

Who is the Licensee?

The organisation where the person or project team is based will be the Licensee. Therefore, the T&Cs must be agreed by someone with authority to consent to these on behalf of the organisation. This person's name must be provided during registration and they will be asked to confirm they agree to the T&Cs.

It is the responsibility of the person completing the registration form to ensure that they have sought appropriate authorisation in order to consent to the T&Cs.

Do I need to pay?

Not-for-profit use. ASCOT is free of charge for not-for-profit use but a license is required.

For-profit use. To enquire about for-profit licensing and fees, please refer to the information and form on the website about for-profit use.

Using ASCOT in research, evaluation and practice

How do I use ASCOT?

How you use ASCOT will depend on the goals of your project or on what you are trying to demonstrate. Before deciding which ASCOT tool to use, you will need to reflect carefully on your aims/objectives and what you are trying to achieve. This will then shape how you use the measure(s).

Make sure to read all the information on the website and the guidance carefully.

You may also wish to refer to some of the academic literature. This scoping review (Rand et al, 2025) provides an overview of the uses of ASCOT in academic research and evaluation from 2012 to 2024.

Can ASCOT be used in economic evaluations?

Yes. ASCOT was originally developed as a measure for use in economic evaluation of social care policy and interventions.

Some ASCOT measures have preference weights – please refer to the guidance for each tool for further detail.

Can I add ASCOT measures (excluding ASCOT-CH4) into a longer survey or interview?

Yes. Many people ask other questions alongside the ASCOT measures (excluding ASCOT-CH4) when they are used in surveys or interviews.

This is fine. However, you should pilot the longer interview schedule first to check how long it takes to complete. We strongly advise that you keep the ASCOT questions as a block of questions. Do not change their order.

You will be asked to tell us how you plan to use the ASCOT questions during the licencing process. You will also need to acknowledge ASCOT in any publications from your research and make sure you reference the measure(s) correctly.

Do I need to use all the questions in the ASCOT measure?

No. You are free to use only the questions that are of use to you. However, without a full set of questions, it is not possible to calculate an overall score.

Please inform us if you plan to use only a selection of the questions when you complete the appropriate licensing form.

How do I score ASCOT?

Details of how to score ASCOT measures are included in the guidance for each tool, which are available to preview on the website. The guidance is also shared (in full) upon licensing.

Adapting ASCOT

Can I make changes to the question wording, format or order (excluding ASCOT-CH4)?

No. ASCOT measures have undergone extensive development and testing. Making changes to the wording, format or order may jeopardise the validity, reliability and integrity of the tool.

Can I make changes to the question wording or order in ASCOT-CH4?

ASCOT-CH4 is more flexible than other ASCOT measures, in terms of its administration, owing to the needs of the people we are collecting data about. A training course, which is required for licensing and use of ASCOT-CH4, takes you through the options available to you.

Can I add my own questions to yours and call this a new measure?

No. Any use of the ASCOT questions or measures must acknowledge our copyright and intellectual property.

If you include the ASCOT in a questionnaire with other questions, you are required to reference ASCOT accordingly. This requirement forms part of T&Cs of use, to which you are required to agree before accessing ASCOT tools.

Please refer to the **Toolkit** page on the website for information on how to reference ASCOT.

Translations

Has ASCOT been translated into other languages?

Yes. Please see the **Translations** page of the ASCOT website.

I want to translate ASCOT. What is the process?

Please reference to the translation guidance document available on the **Translations** page of the ASCOT website.

Can I translate ASCOT myself for my project?

Any translation of ASCOT must be done in consultation with, and approval from, the ASCOT team. A licence is required. Any translations conducted without the approval of the ASCOT team, and the appropriate licence, will be deemed as a breach of copyright and Intellectual Property. The copyright holder, the University of Kent, reserves the right to take legal action in such situations.

I am a PhD/master's student. Can I translate ASCOT into another language?

No, you must have permission to translate ASCOT. As a patient-reported outcome measure (PROM), translation of ASCOT must follow a rigorous translation methodology. All translations must be discussed with and approved by the ASCOT team.

The translation guidance should answer any questions. If you still have questions after reading the guidance, please contact Lizzie Welch: E.Welch@kent.ac.uk.

Using ASCOT-CH4

How long does it take to collect the data using ASCOT-CH4?

We estimate that it would take one researcher 2-3 days to collect the data for approximately 10 care home residents.

This is because of the time taken to carry out structured observations, speak to residents, interview staff and possibly family members. This evidence is then collated into ratings, and additional time needs to be allowed for making the ratings.

CH4 is not a 'quick' methodology but it can be used with people living with dementia or other cognitive and communication difficulties, and provides researchers and/or providers with very rich data about the lives of residents.

ASCOT-SCT4 Dignity

In ASCOT-SCT4, there are eight ASCOT domains but nine questions. Why?

Please refer to the ASCOT-SCT4 guidance, which explains why.

In ASCOT-SCT4, which dignity question (Q8 or Q9) should I use in scoring?

Please refer to the ASCOT-SCT4 guidance, which explains how to score the measure.

I am planning to use ASCOT-SCT4 at 'pre' and 'post' to understand the effect of a new service/intervention. At 'pre' intervention, people will not yet have received the service. Because of this, they will not be able to answer the dignity questions. What should I do?

The way to deal with this is to omit both Q8 and Q9 from the ASCOT-SCT4 at 'pre' intervention.

You can then use the 'no needs' level weighting for dignity to calculate the overall SCRQoL score (see ASCOT-SCT4 guidance for further detail).

Commercial/For-profit use

Can I use ASCOT for commercial/for-profit purposes?

ASCOT is available for not-for-profit purposes free of charge with a licence requirement. Not-for-profit is defined as any use for the benefit of the public without generating income. For example, a local authority or municipality wishing to use ASCOT for evaluation or quality improvement is considered not-for-profit.

For-profit use requires a licence and a fee, which depends factors, e.g. the type of use, number of participants, the size of the study, etc.

To enquire about for-profit licensing/fees, please refer to the **licensing** page of the website.

How is commercial/for-profit use of ASCOT defined?

Any use by a pharmaceutical company or consultancy (e.g. in a Patient Reported Outcome measure) or other commercial organisations (e.g. health and/or social care commercial providers) is considered for-profit.

To enquire about for-profit licensing/fees, please refer to the **licensing** page of the website.

How is non-commercial/not-for-profit use of ASCOT defined?

Not-for-profit is defined as any use for the benefit of the public without generating income. For example, a local authority or municipality wishing to use ASCOT for evaluation or quality improvement is considered not-for-profit.

I am a consultant reviewing different measures for a client. Do I have to pay to view and/or use ASCOT?

The ASCOT measures are available on our website as a preview.

If you are planning to use ASCOT measures for for-profit purposes, you will be required to get a for-profit licence and pay a fee.

For further detail, please refer to the **licensing** page of the website.