Education without Frontiers

# SPECIAL NEEDS REPORT

# WHY SPECIAL NEEDS?

**Education without Frontiers (Europroject)**

- 20 schools in 19 European countries
- Two year projects

**Some key principles**:

- To promote equal opportunities
- To value all people equally
- To promote a European dimension in Education

# THE SCHOOLS INVOLVED

17 schools completed the survey

- Quite different schools
  - Different sizes (less than 500 to 1500+)
  - Different age ranges
  - Different types

# SCHOOL SIZES

| | |
|---|---|
| 4 Schools | ≤ 500 |
| 5 Schools | 500 - 1000 |
| 6 Schools | 1001 - 1500 |
| 2 Schools | ≥ 1500 |

# SCHOOL AGE RANGES

| | |
|---|---|
| All Schools | 16 - 18 |
| 11 Schools | 12 - 18 |
| 15 Schools | 14 - 18 |
| 1 School | starts at 6 |
| 1 School | up to 22 |

# SPECIAL NEEDS AREAS OF FOCUS

Many areas could have been chosen

We chose

- Dyslexia
- Dyscalculia
- AD(H)D
- ASD
- Exceptional Giftedness

# WHAT WAS OUR PURPOSE?

**Identifying what works best in terms of**

- Identifying and diagnosing the special need
- Helping and supporting students

**Improving what happens in all our schools**

- Through teachers
- Through students

**Finding out what help schools need**

# IDENTIFICATION & DIAGNOSIS

Identification:

- Symptoms recognised

Diagnosis:

- Confirmation by authorised person – usually resulting in special provision

# IDENTIFICATION

Mainly by

- Teachers (nearly all involve class teachers)
- Parents
- Former schools

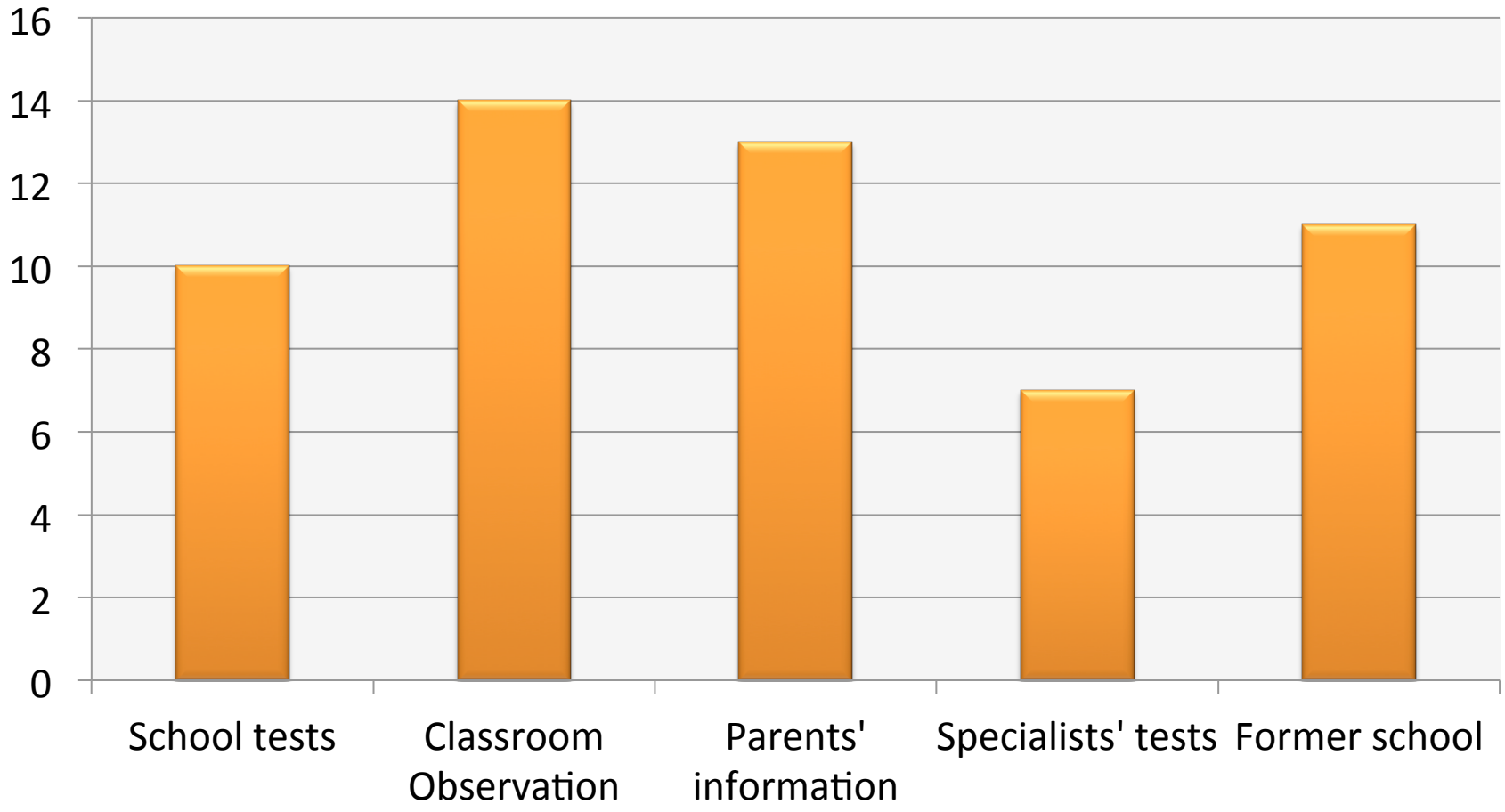
Usually all of these – and more!

# DIAGNOSIS

Diagnosis

- Mainly by non-teacher professionals
- Only 2 schools have class teachers authorised
- Only 5 even have Special Needs Co-ordinators authorised

# DYSLEXIA: IDENTIFICATION



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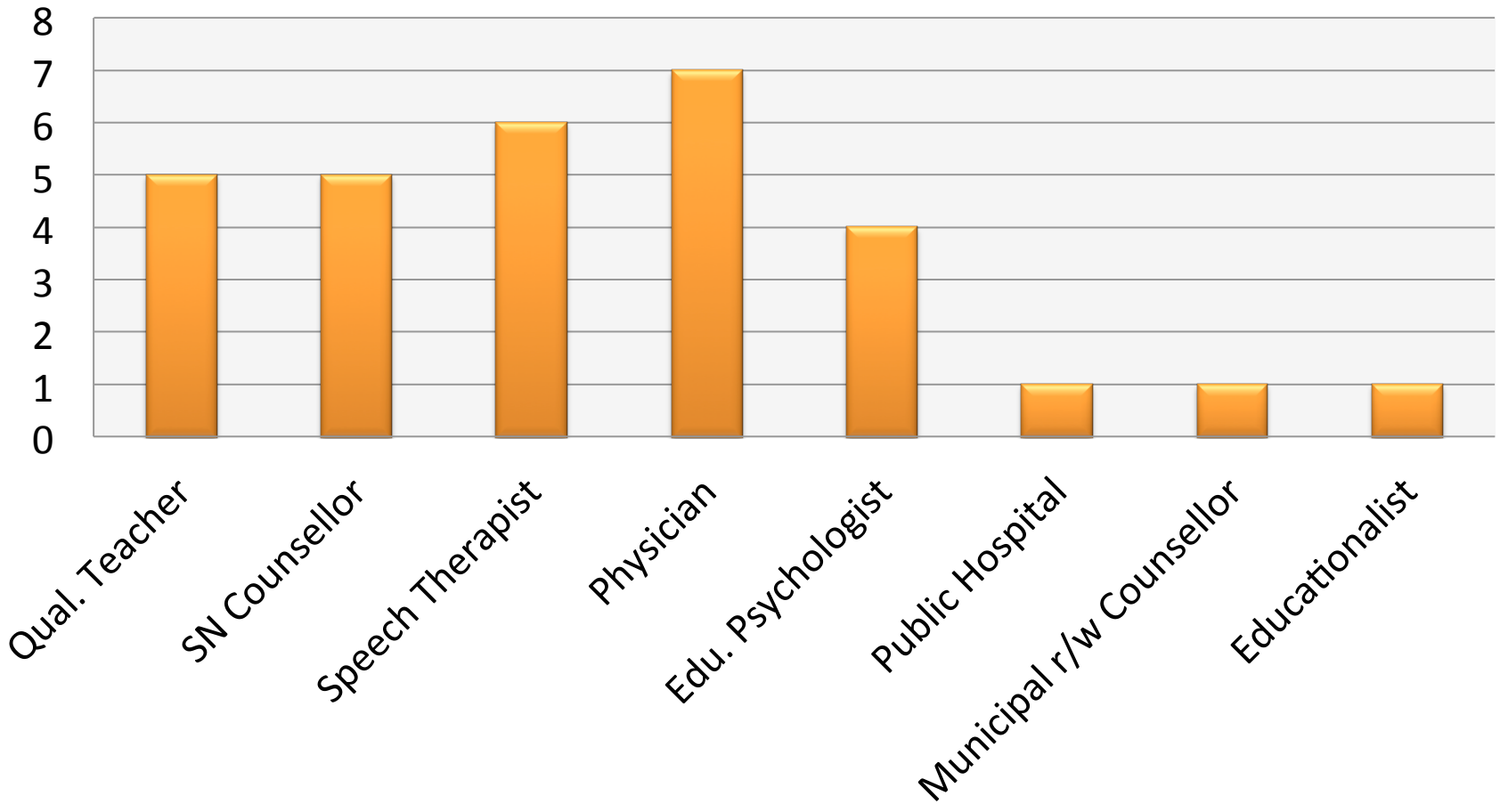
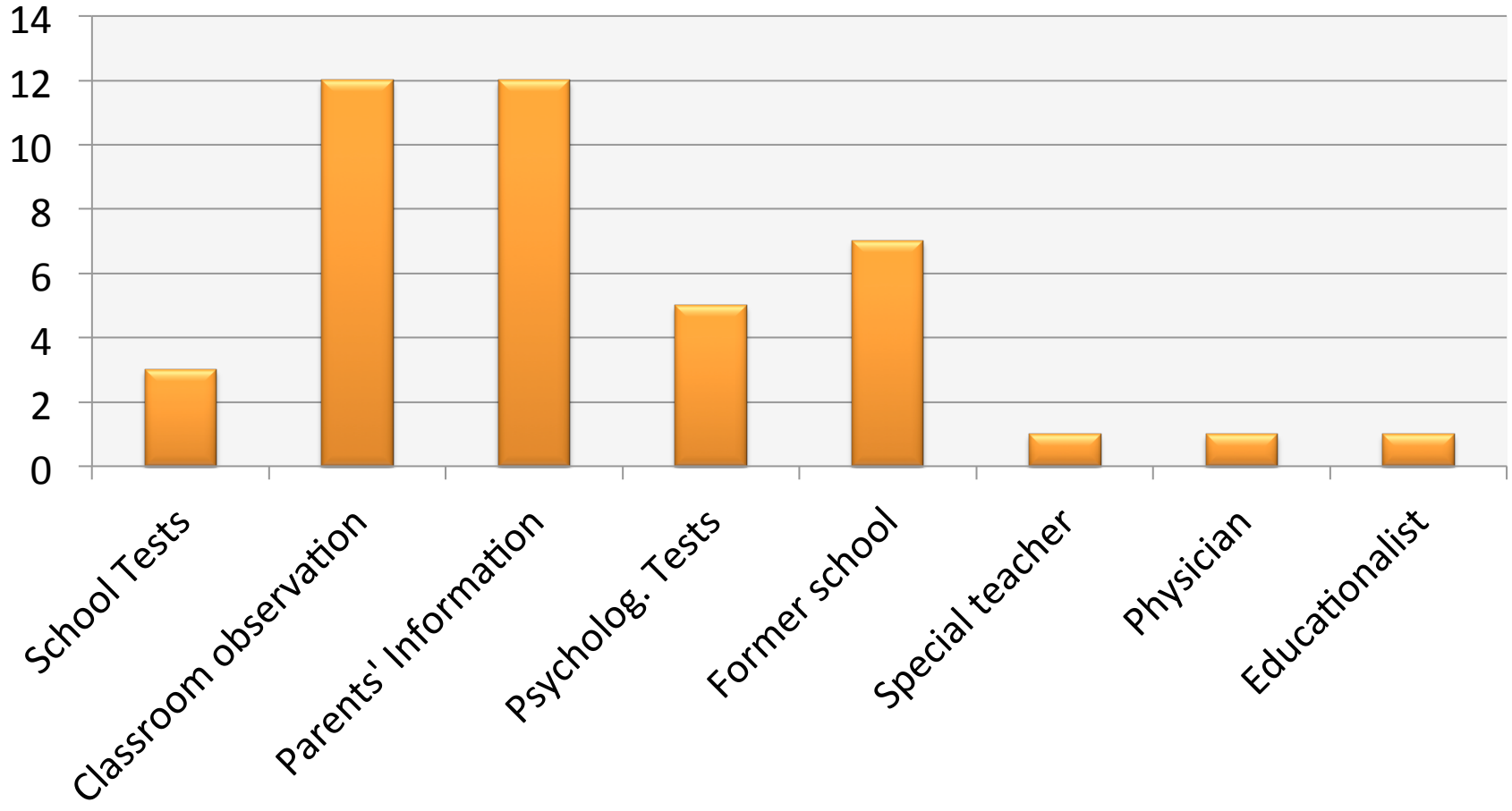
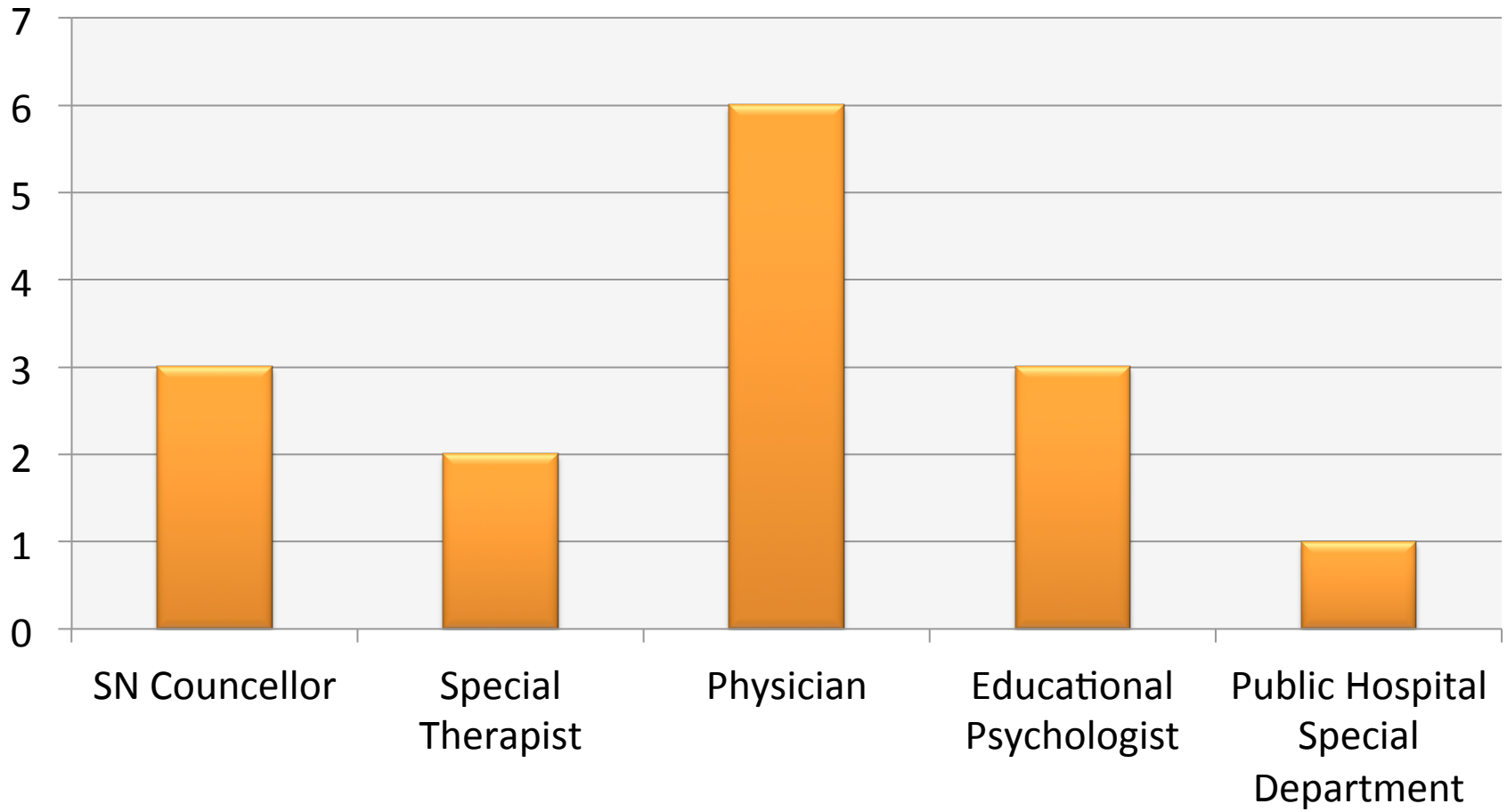


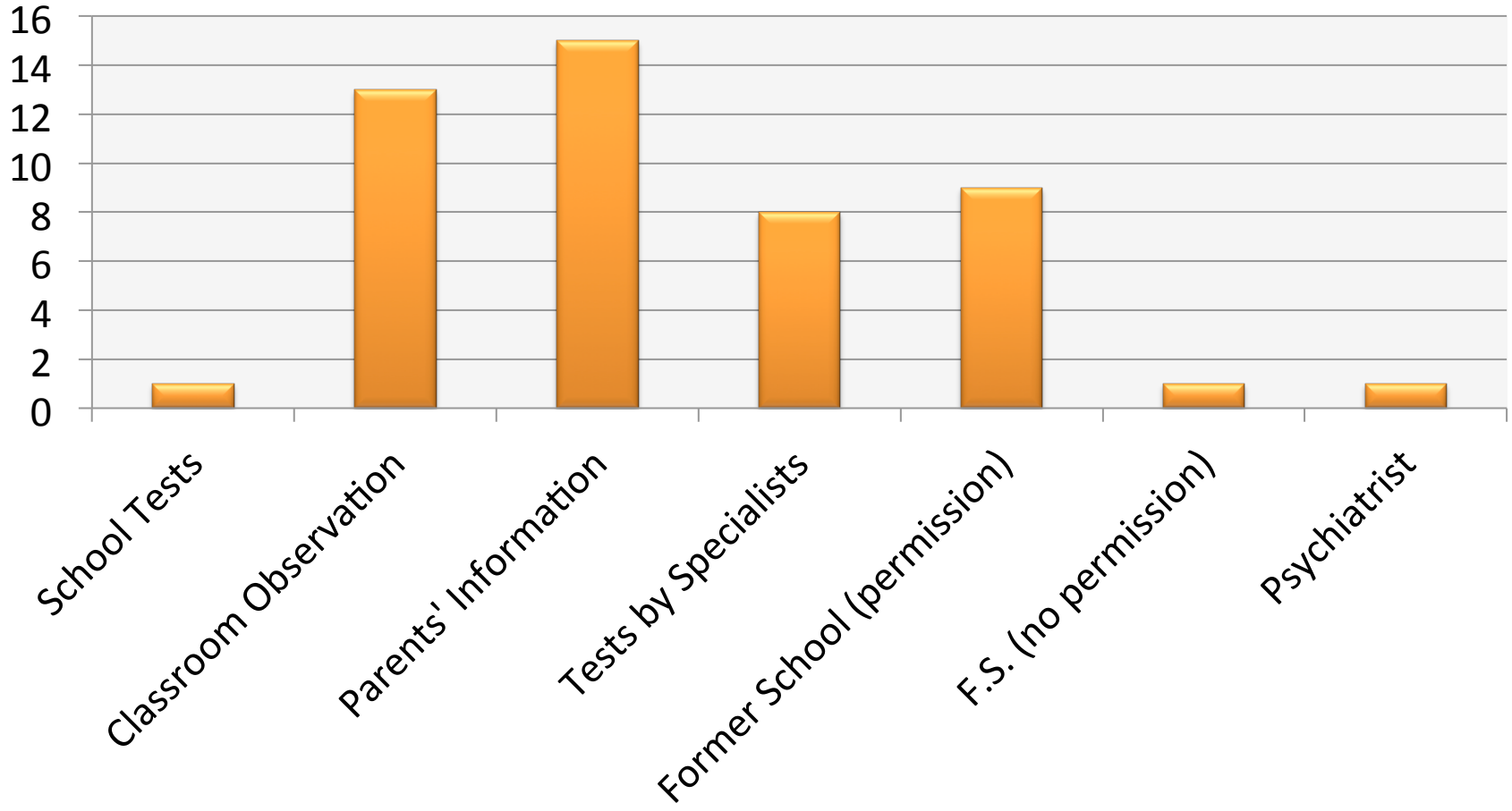
# DYSCALCULIA: IDENTIFICATION



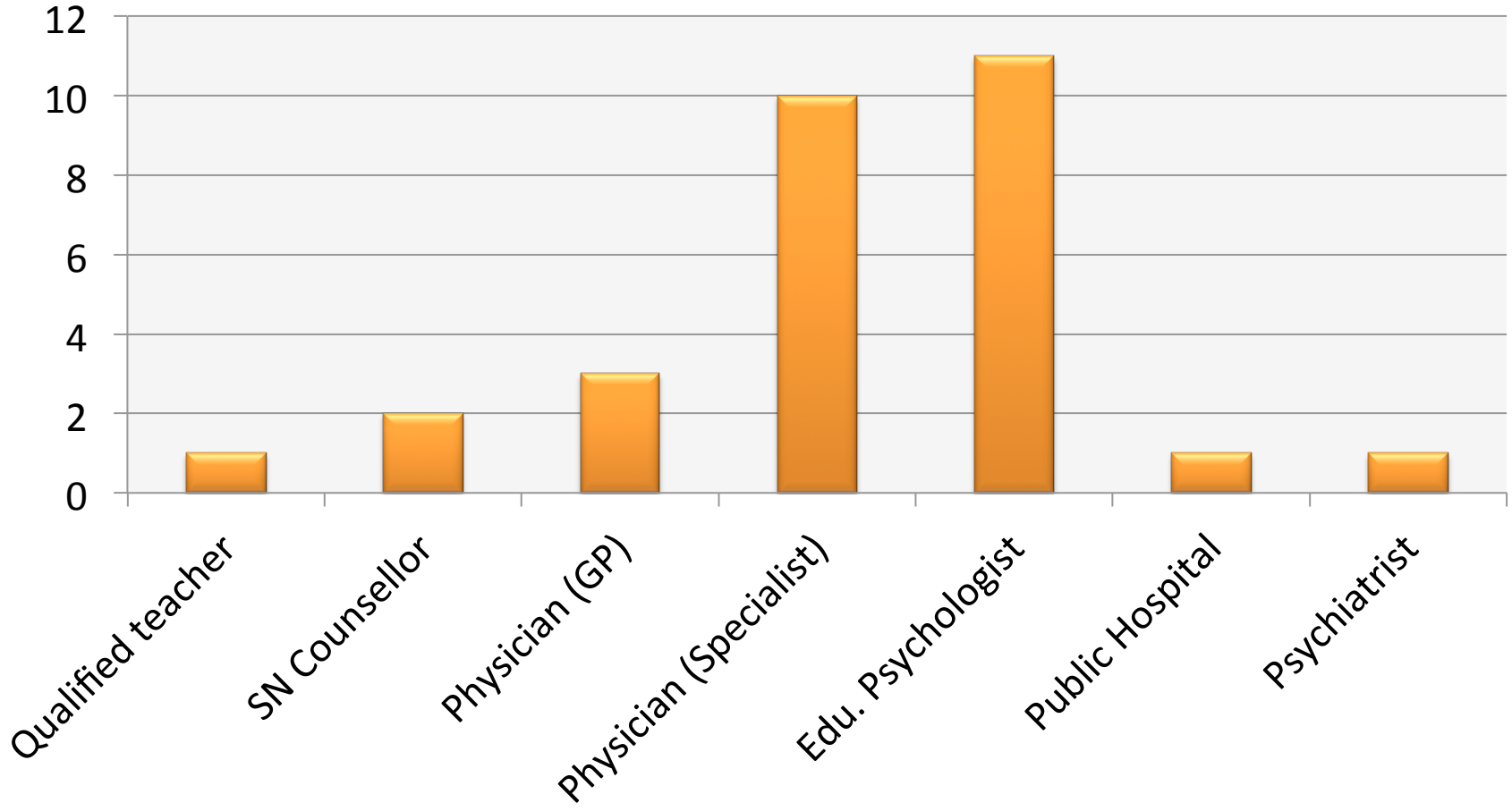
# DYSCALCULIA: DIAGNOSIS



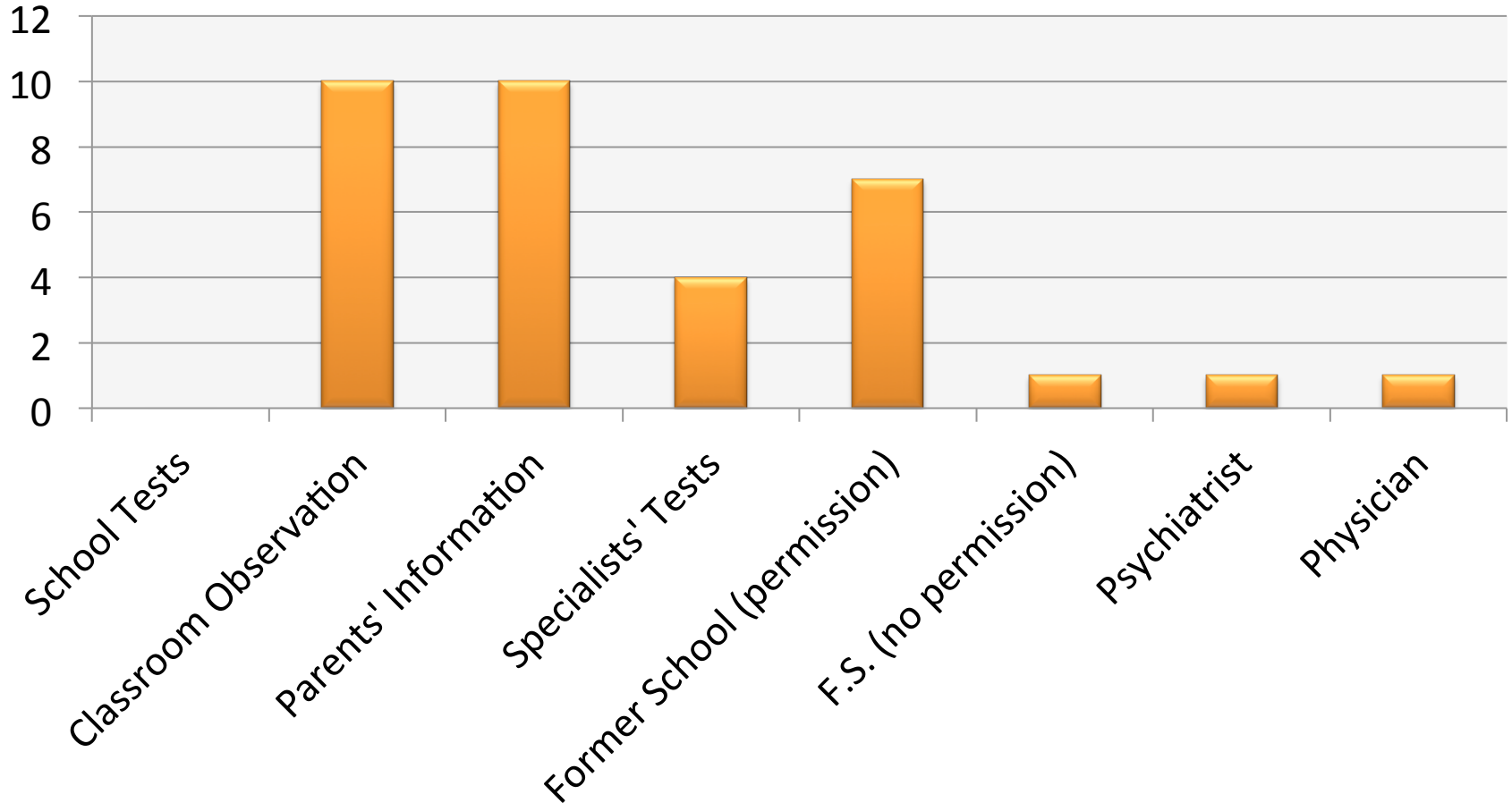
# AD(H)D: IDENTIFICATION



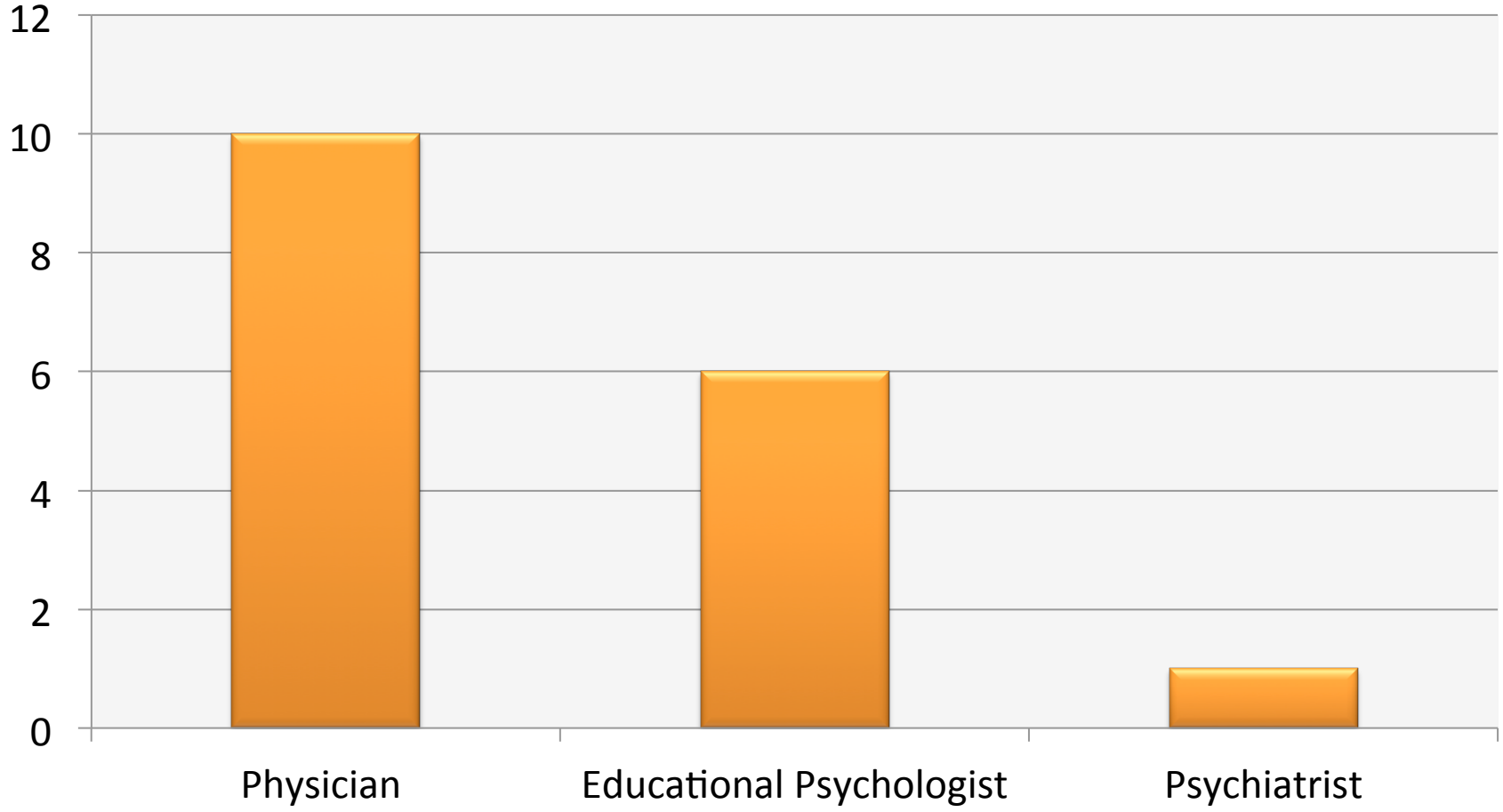
# AD(H)D: DIAGNOSIS



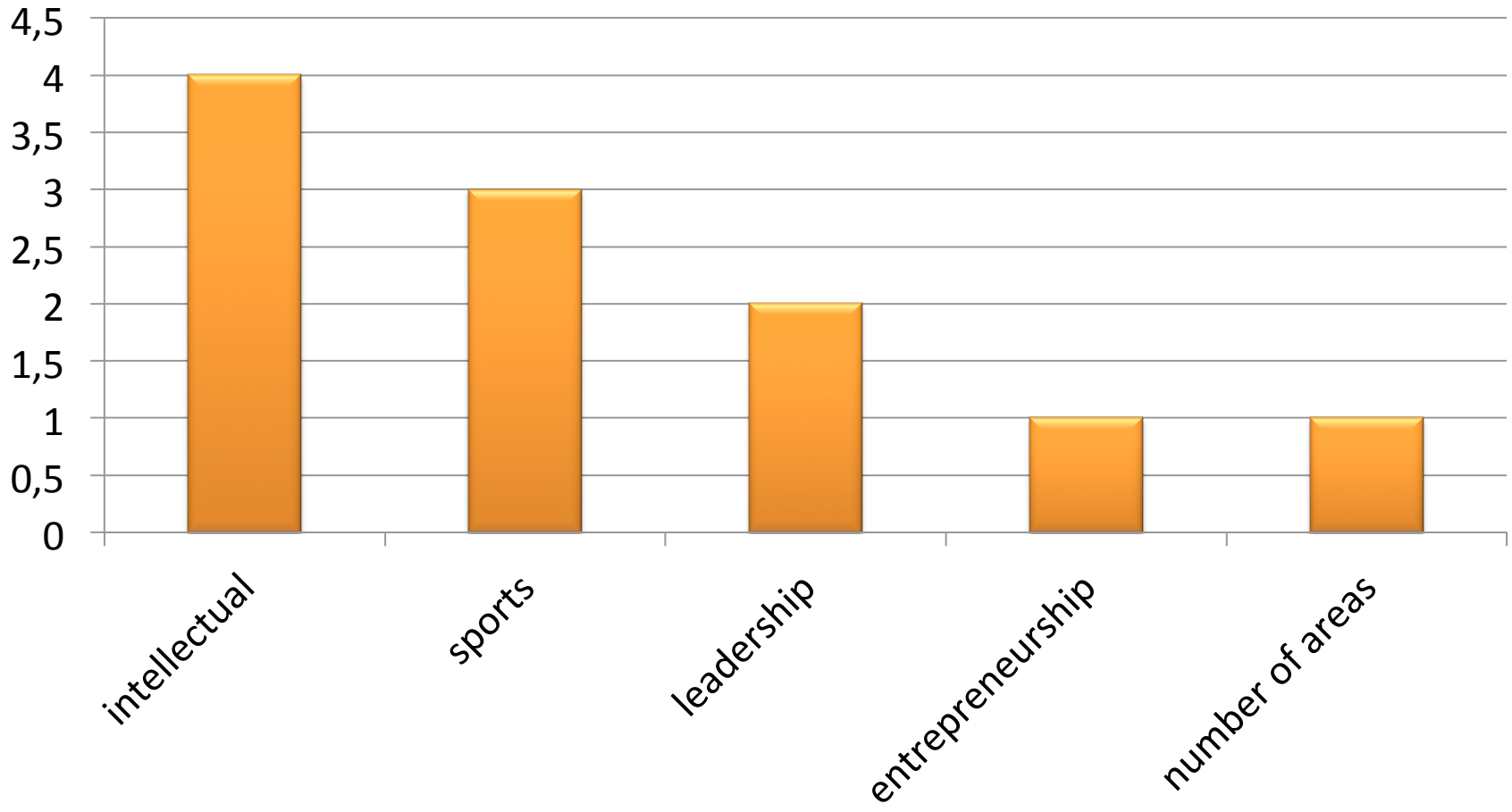
# ASD: IDENTIFICATION



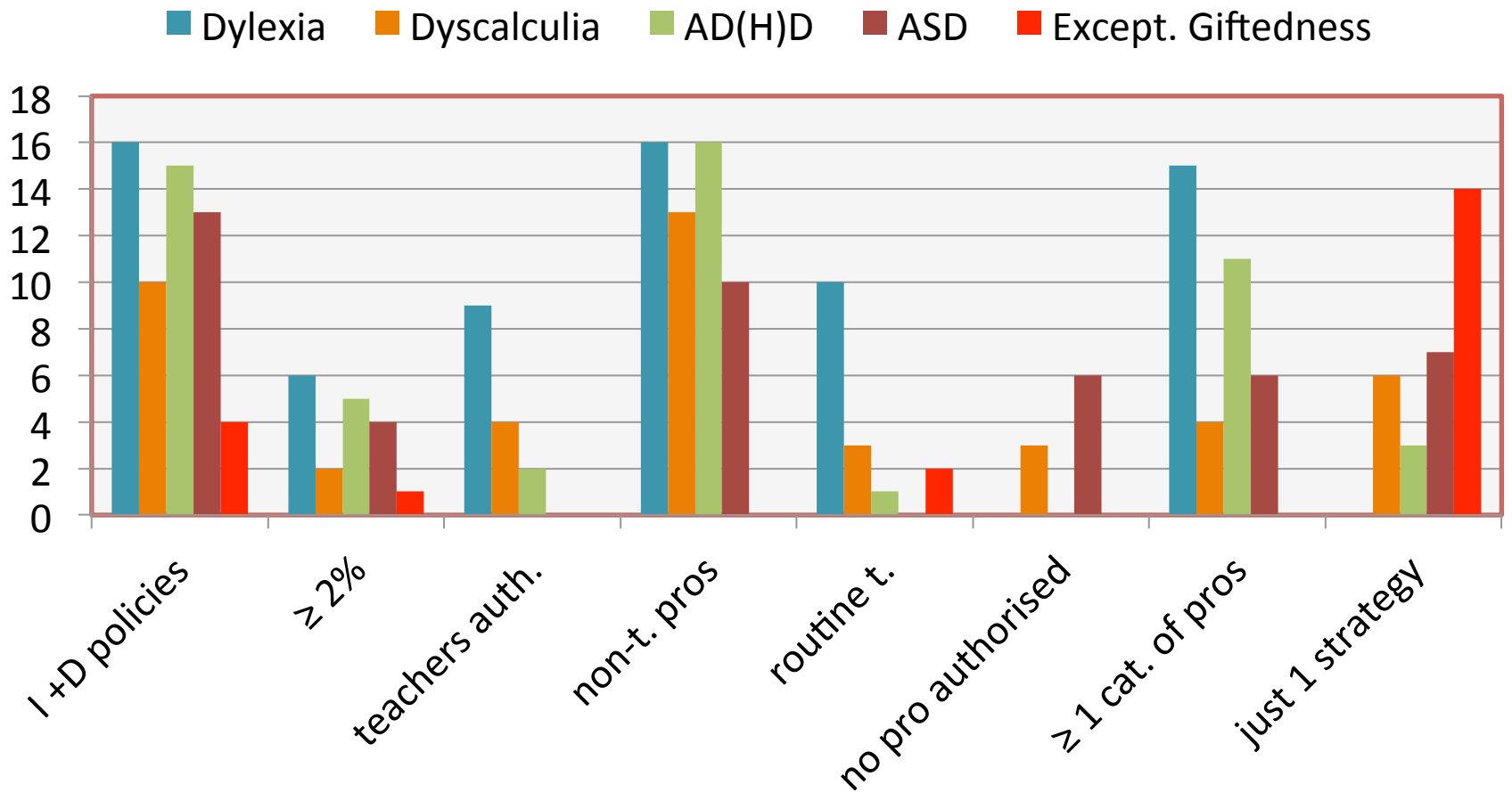
# ASD: DIAGNOSIS



# AREAS OF GIFTEDNESS IDENTIFIED



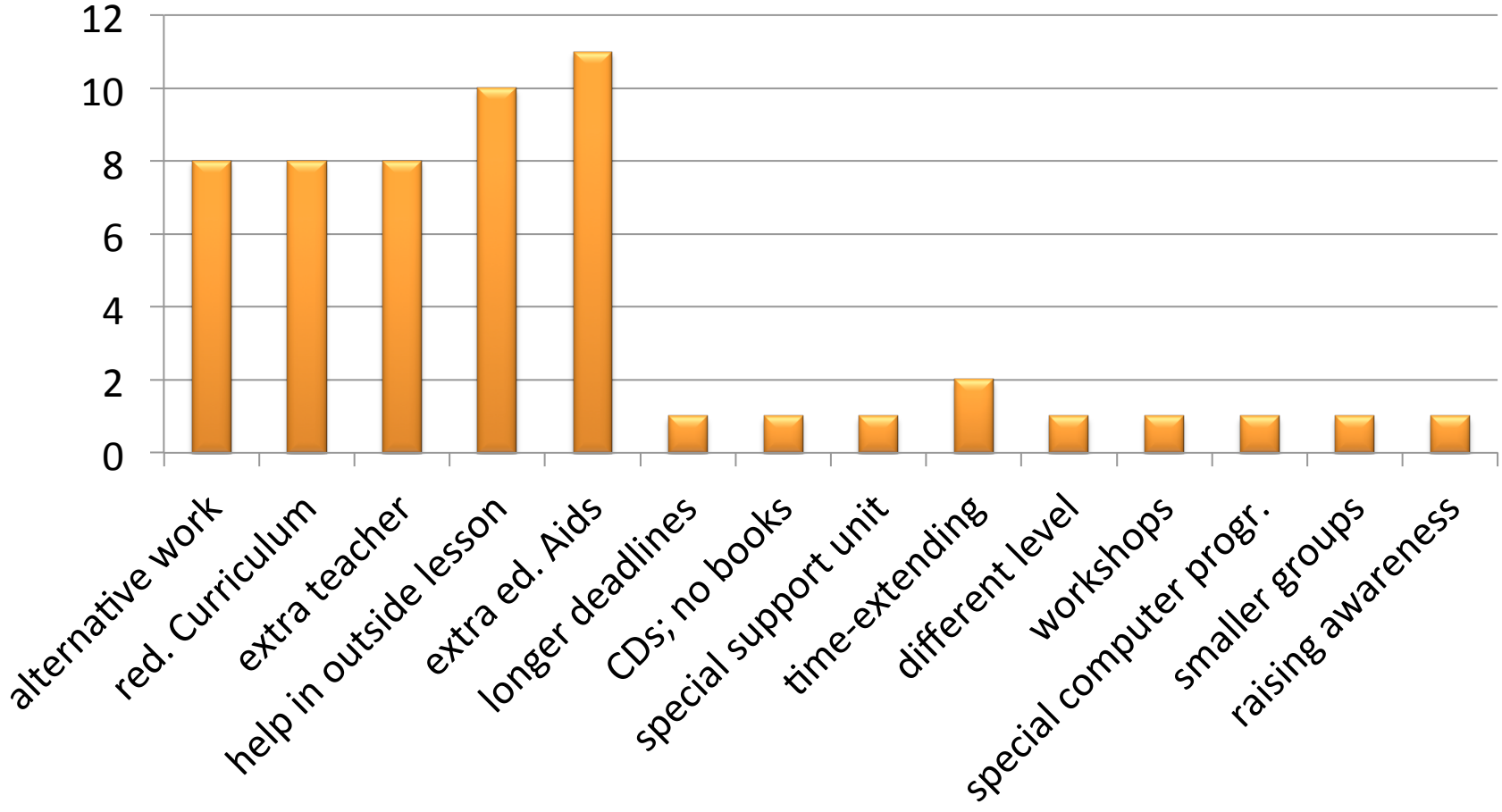
# IDENTIFICATION AND DIAGNOSIS: SOME COMPARRISONS



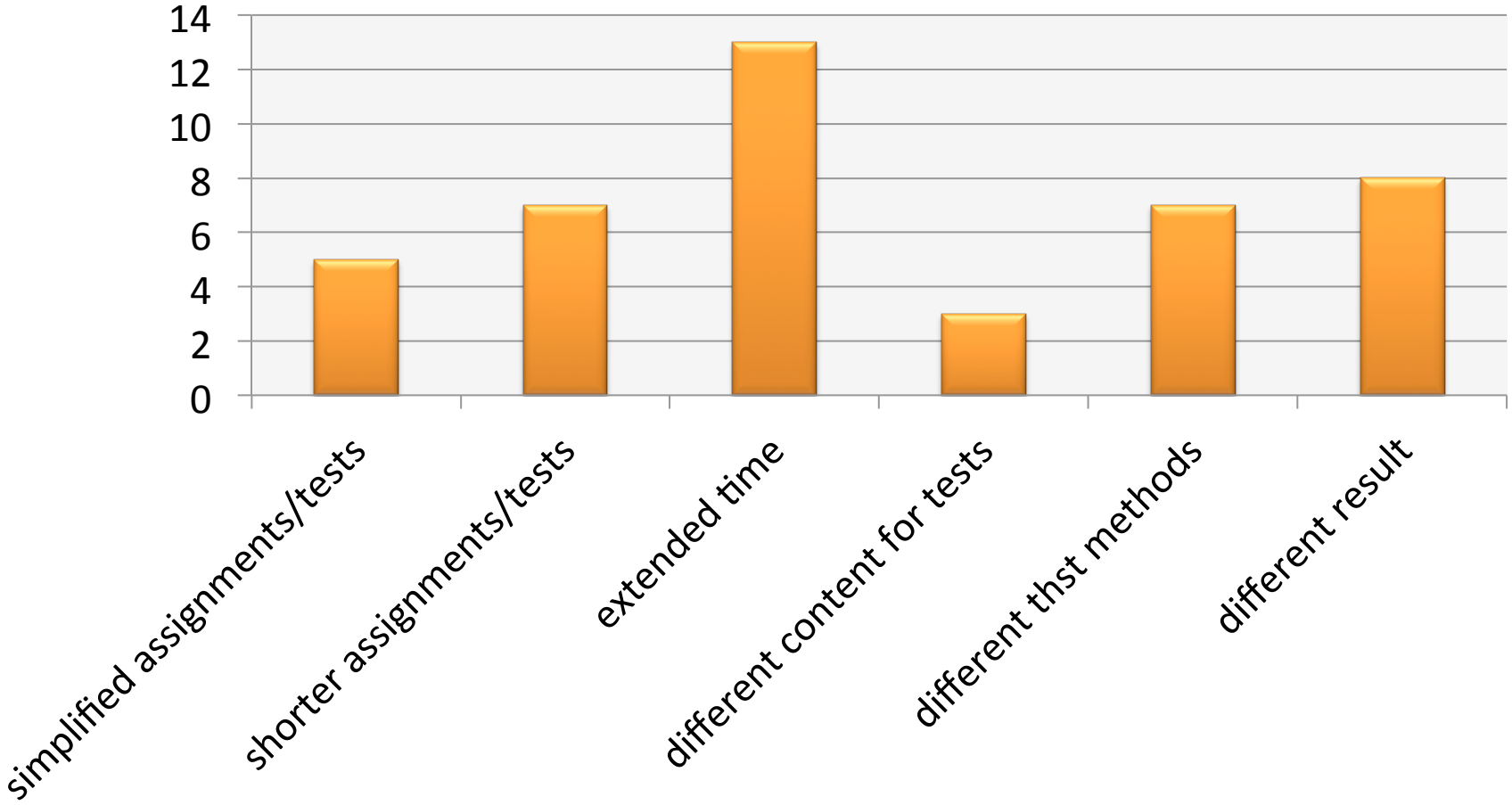
# SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

1. Why the heavy focus on dyslexia?
2. Which of the wide range of strategies are proving most effective?
3. Which needs would it be appropriate for teachers to be trained to diagnose?
4. What good practice is there to be shared in dealing with non-teacher professionals?
5. Exceptional Giftedness.
   - Is it a Special Need?
   - In which areas should it be identified?
   - What help and support is most effective?

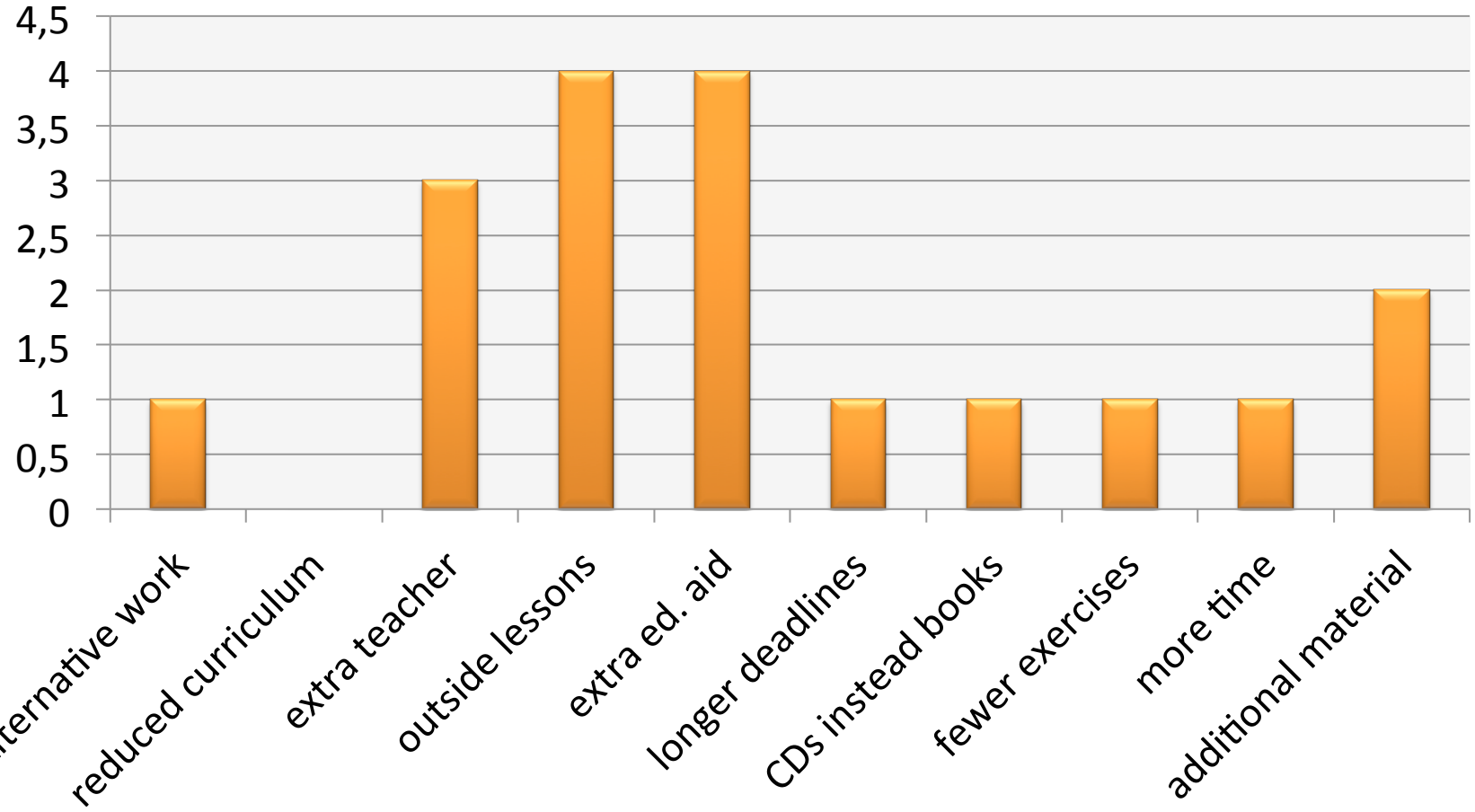
# DYSLEXIA: SUPPORT STRATEGIES



# DYSLEXIA: ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES



# DYSCALCULIA: SUPPORT STRATEGIES



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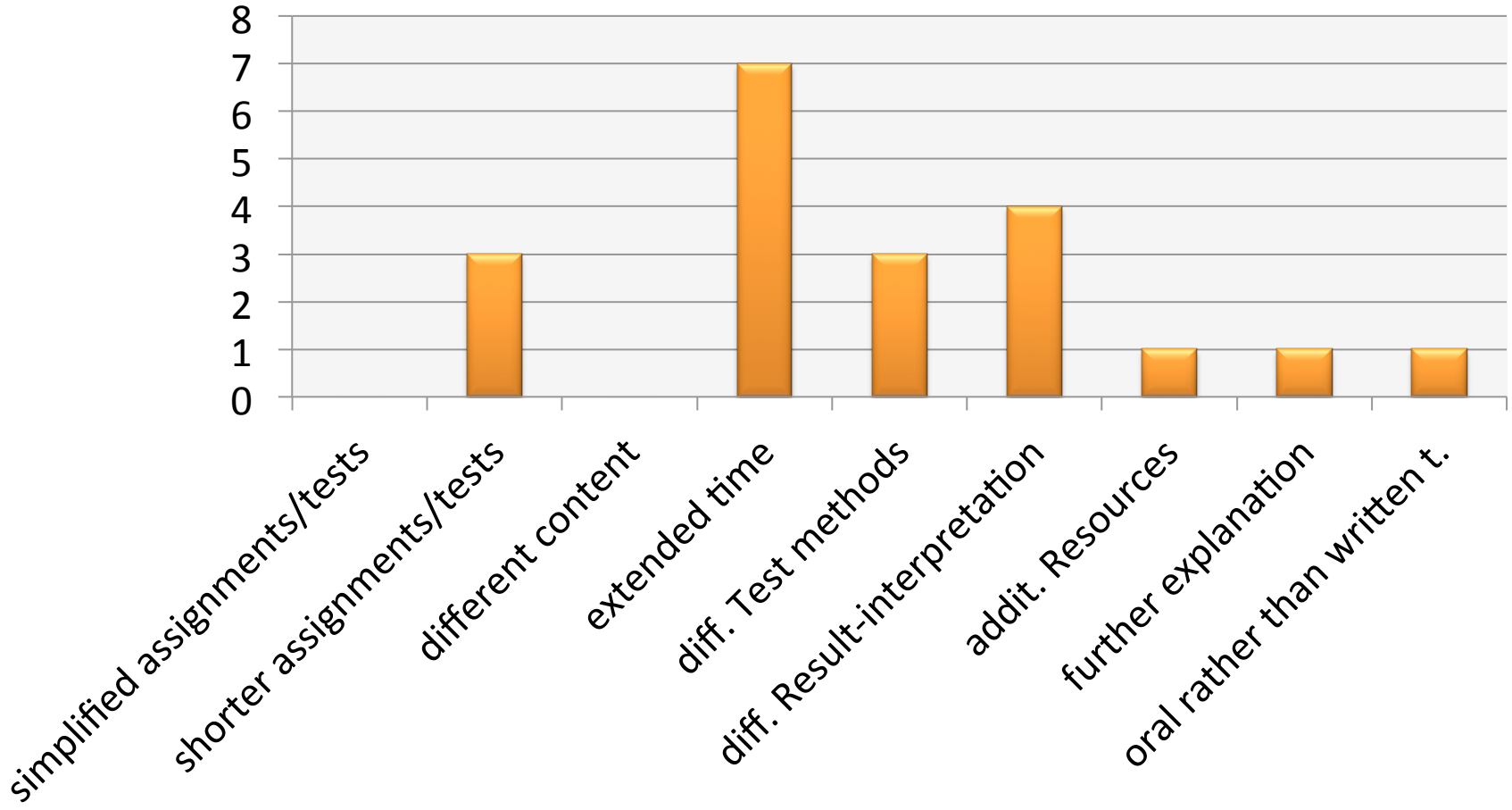
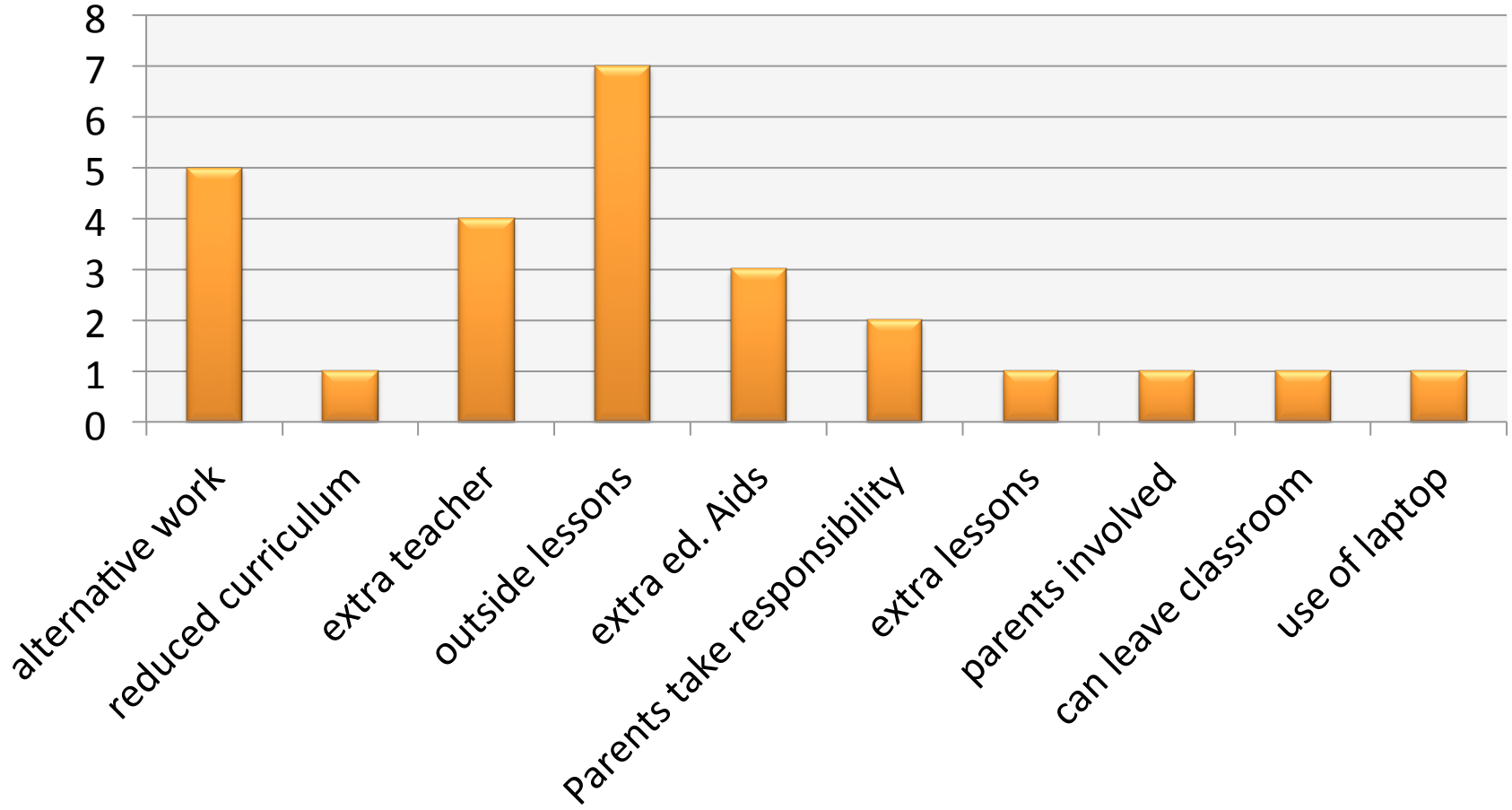


# AD(H)D: SUPPORT STRATEGIES



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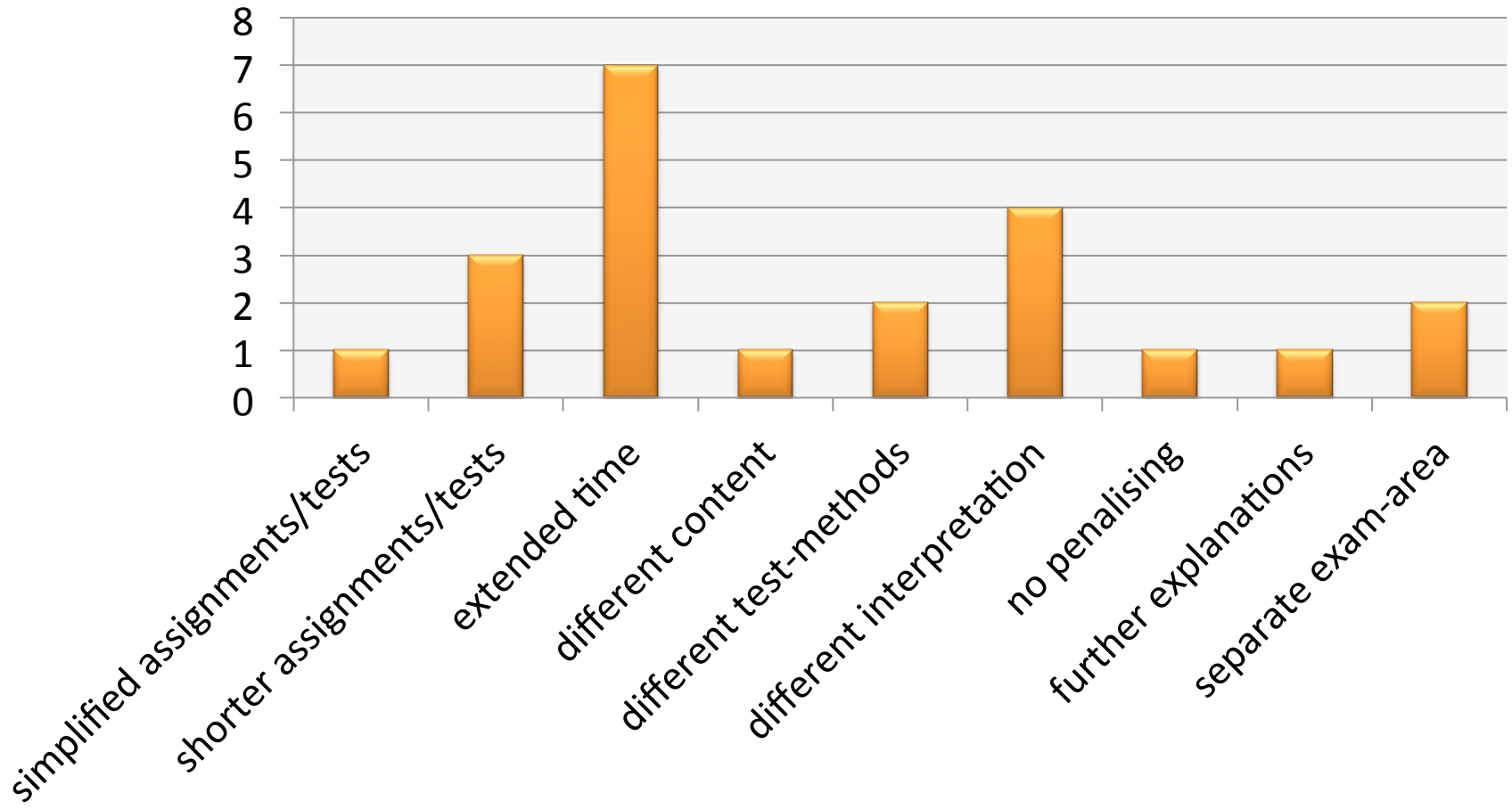
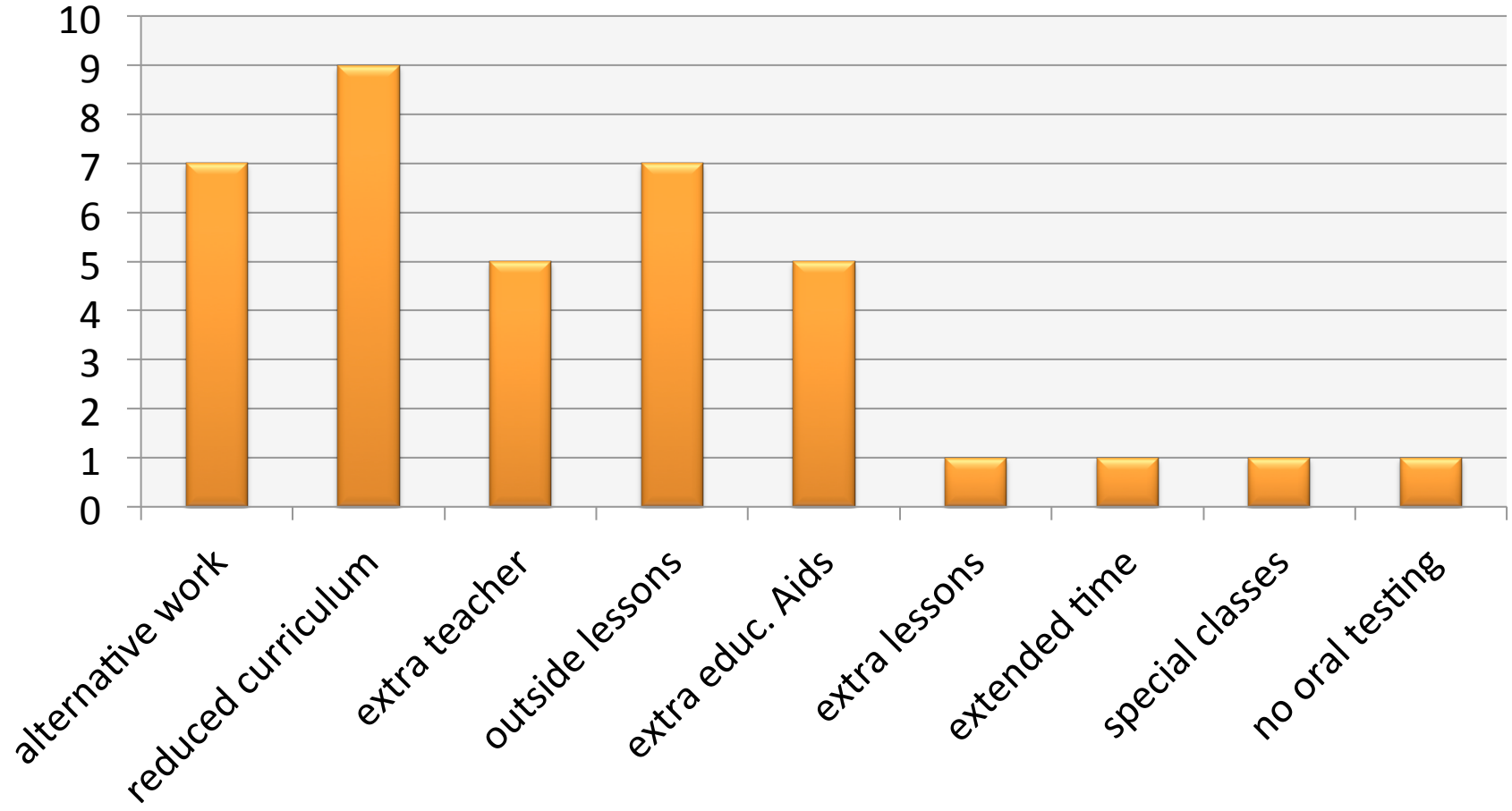


# ASD: SUPPORT STRATEGIES



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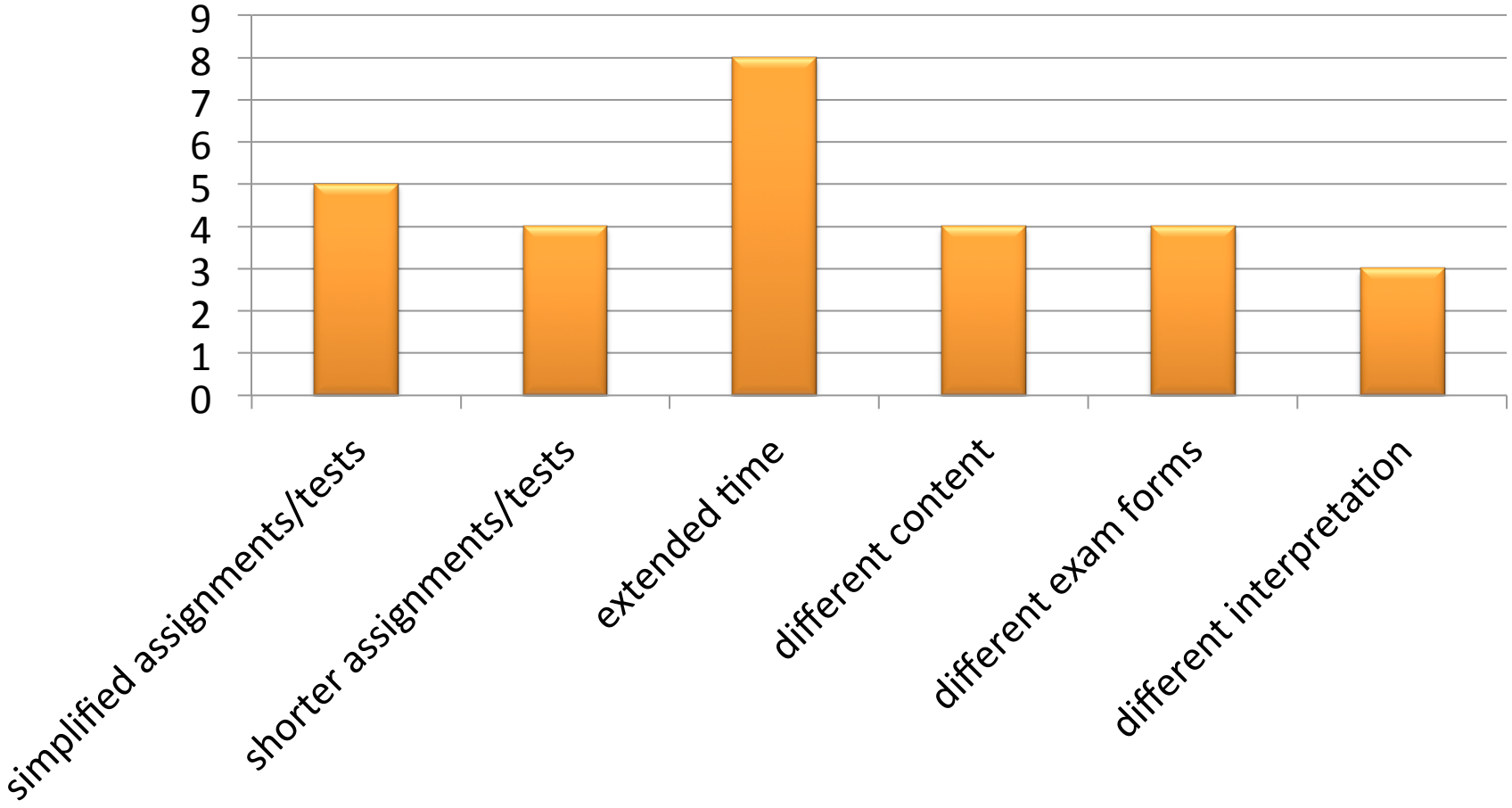
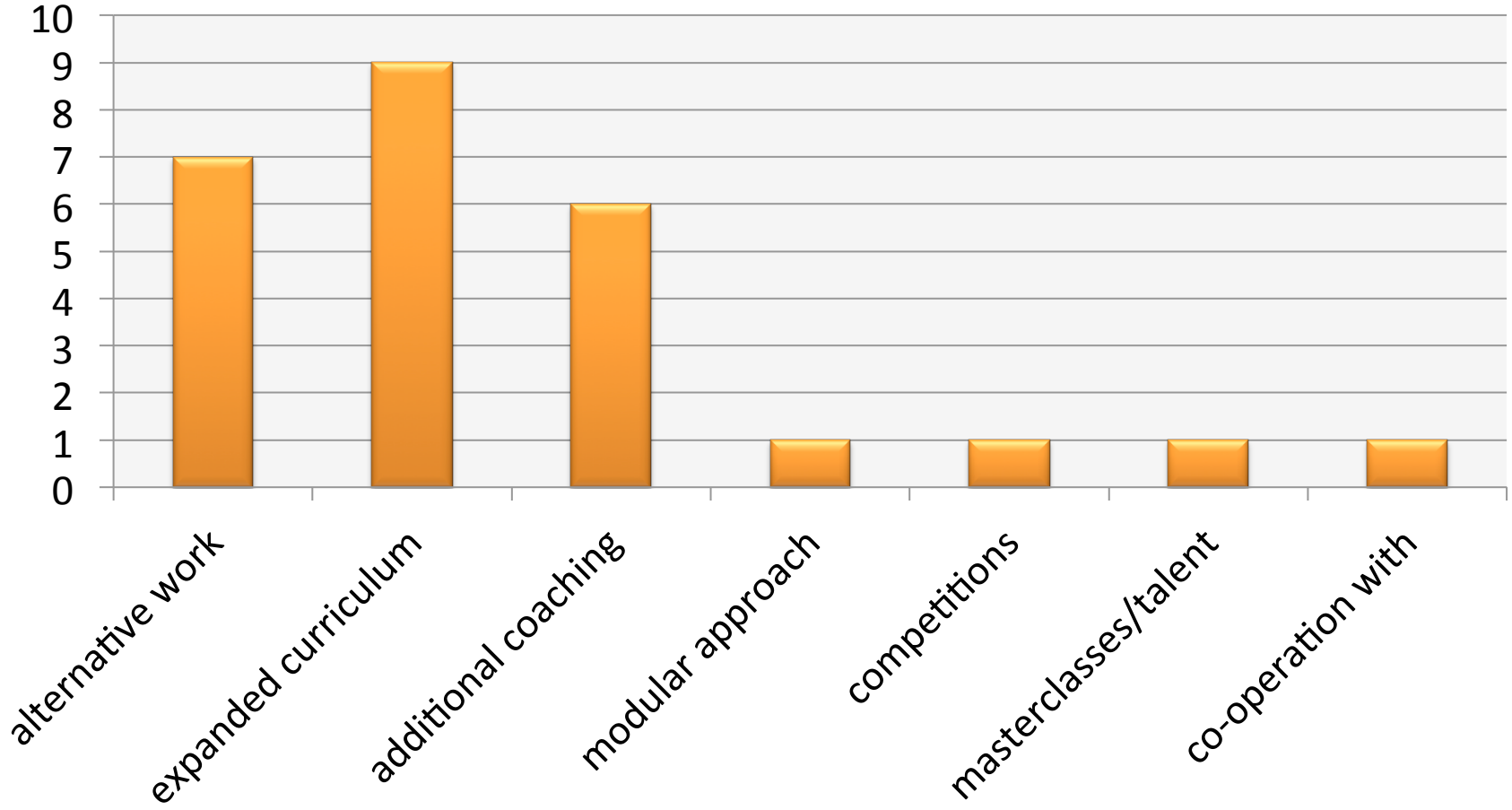
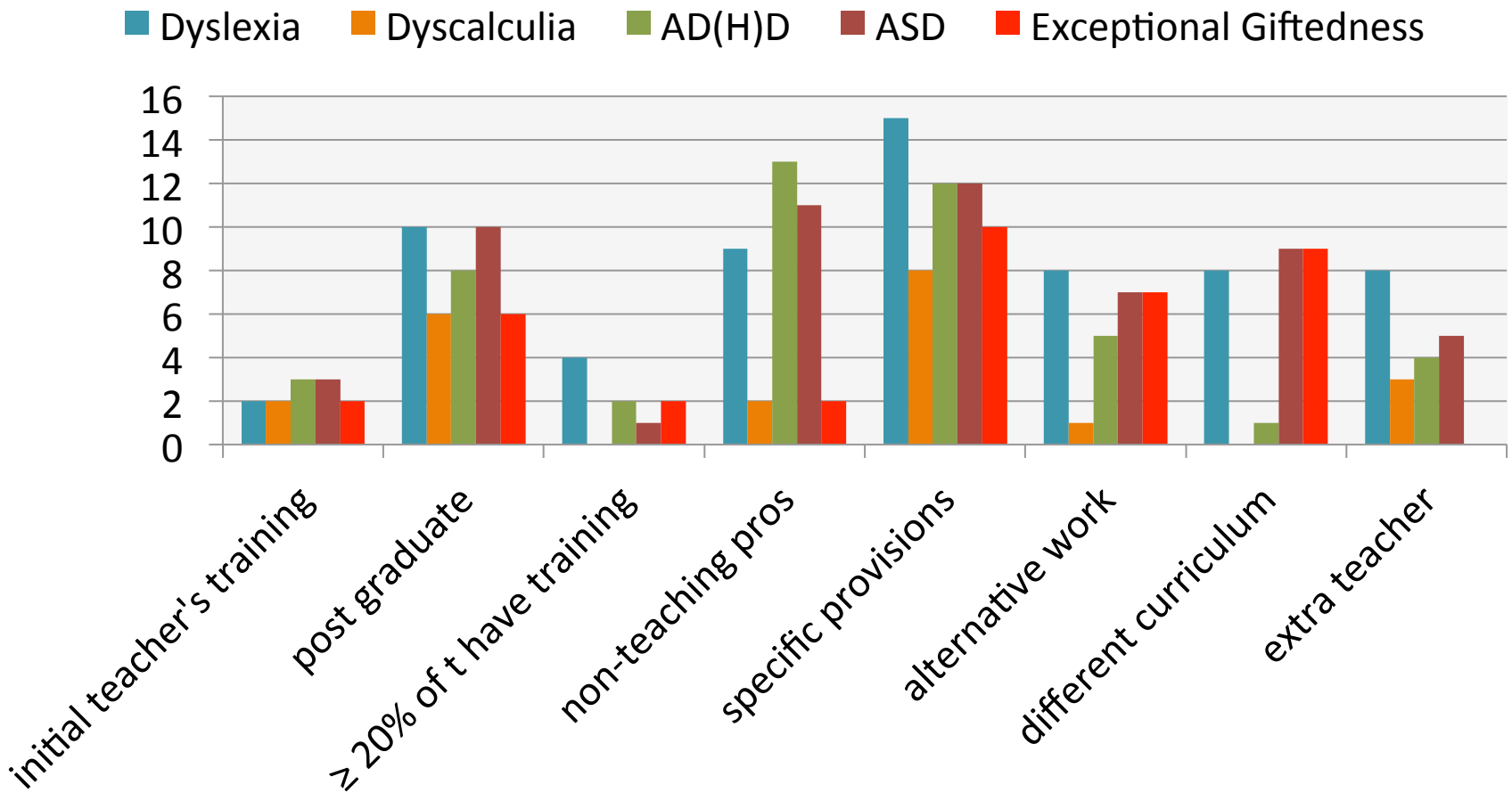


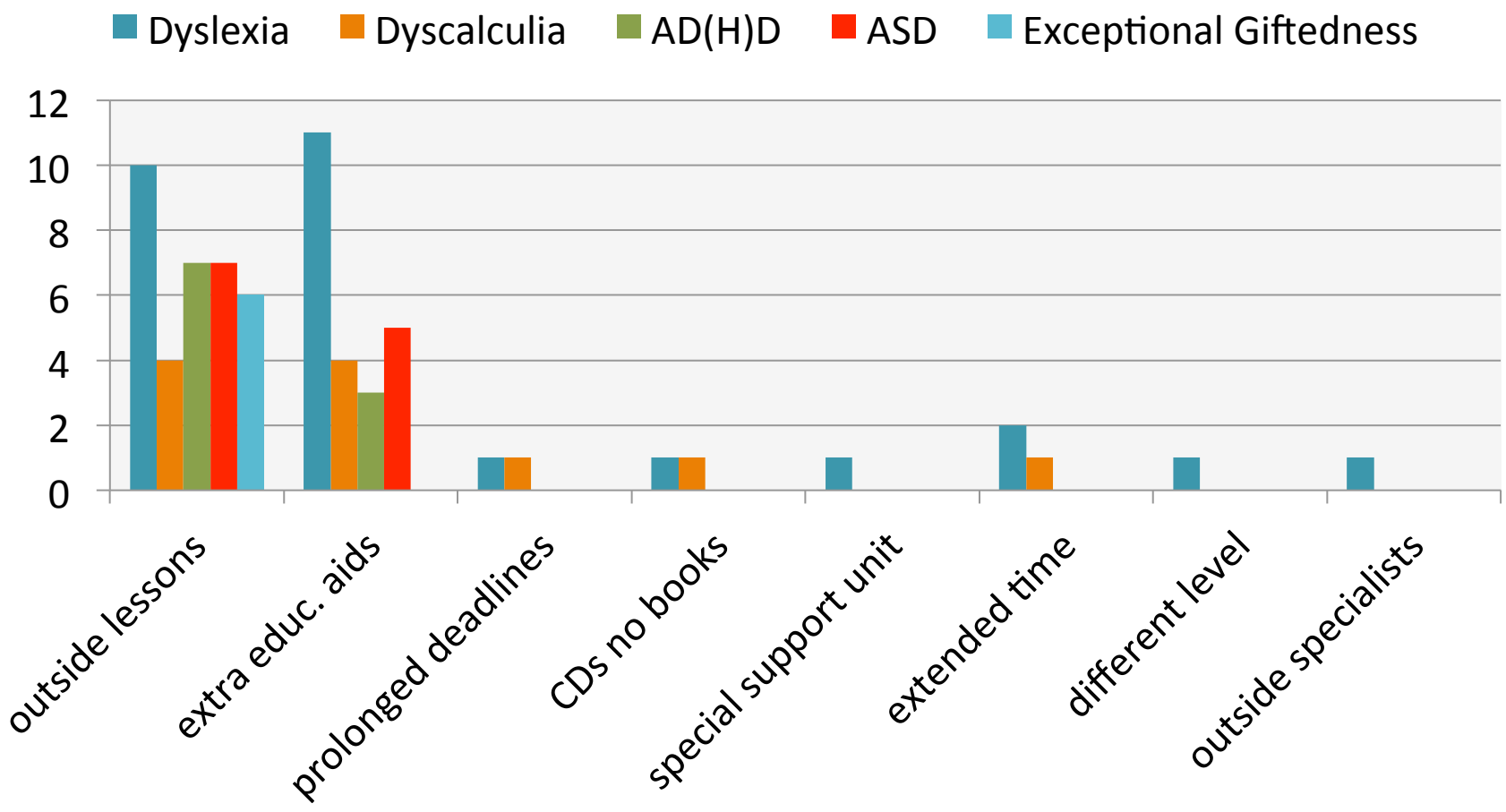
# EXCEPTIONAL GIFTEDNESS: SUPPORT STRATEGIES



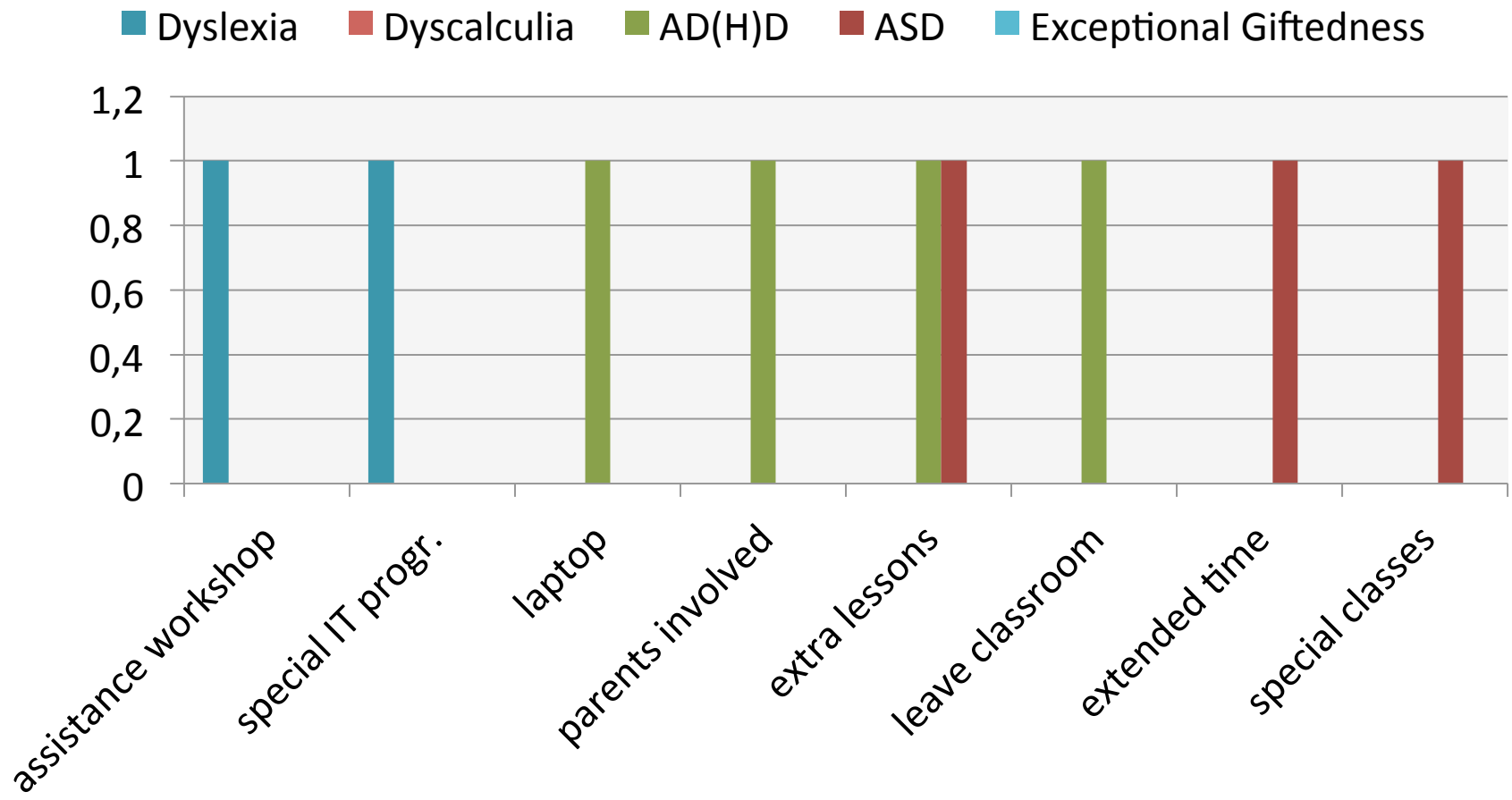
# PROVISION: SUMMARY 1



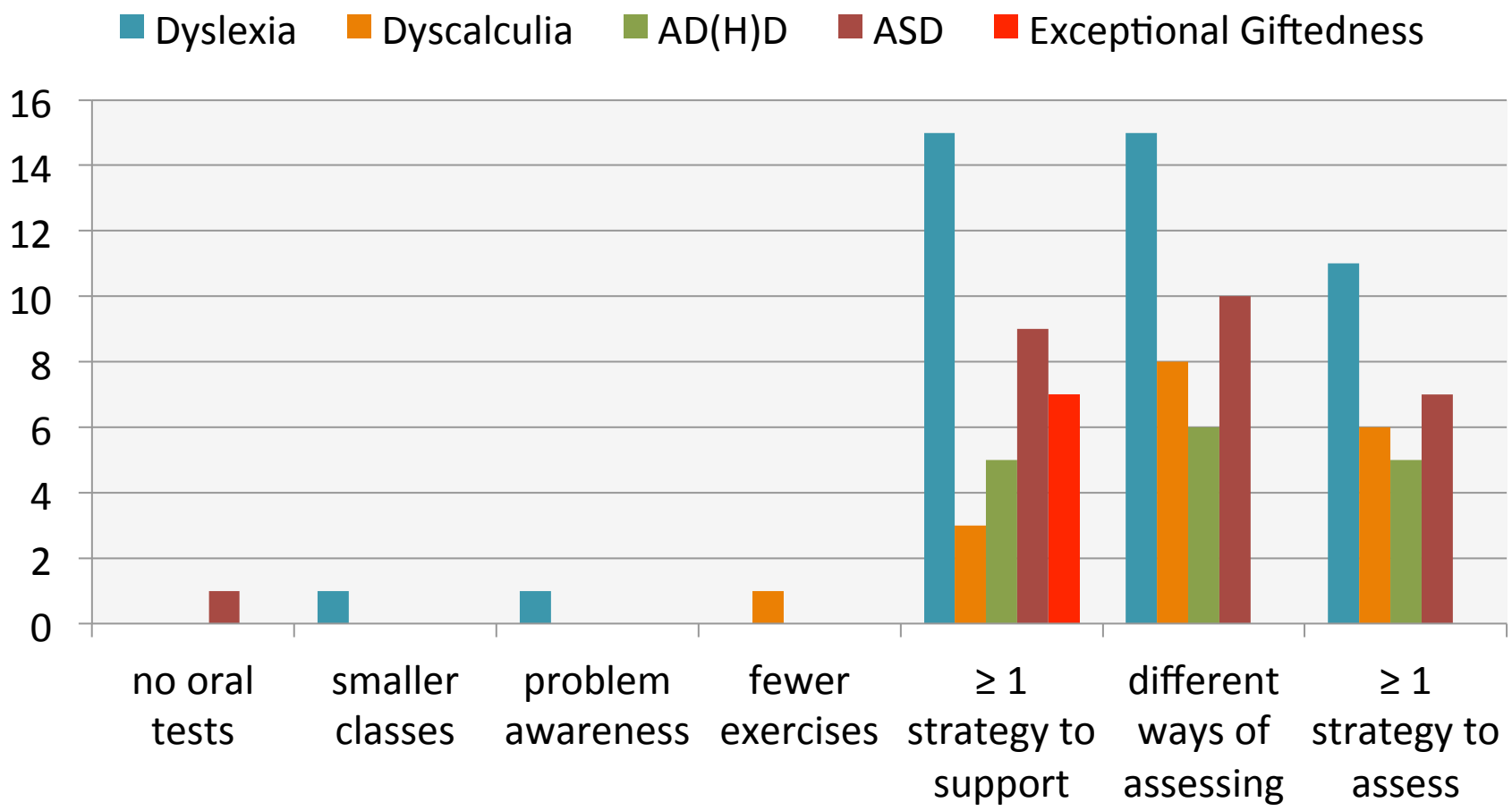
# PROVISION: SUMMARY 2



# PROVISION: SUMMARY 3



# PROVISION: SUMMARY 4



# SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

**Teacher Training**

- Why so little on SN in ITT? What could be done?
- Is there enough training for serving teachers?
  - Is the balance right?
  - Are the needs changing?
- Can we expect teachers to be effective in dealing with SN without training?

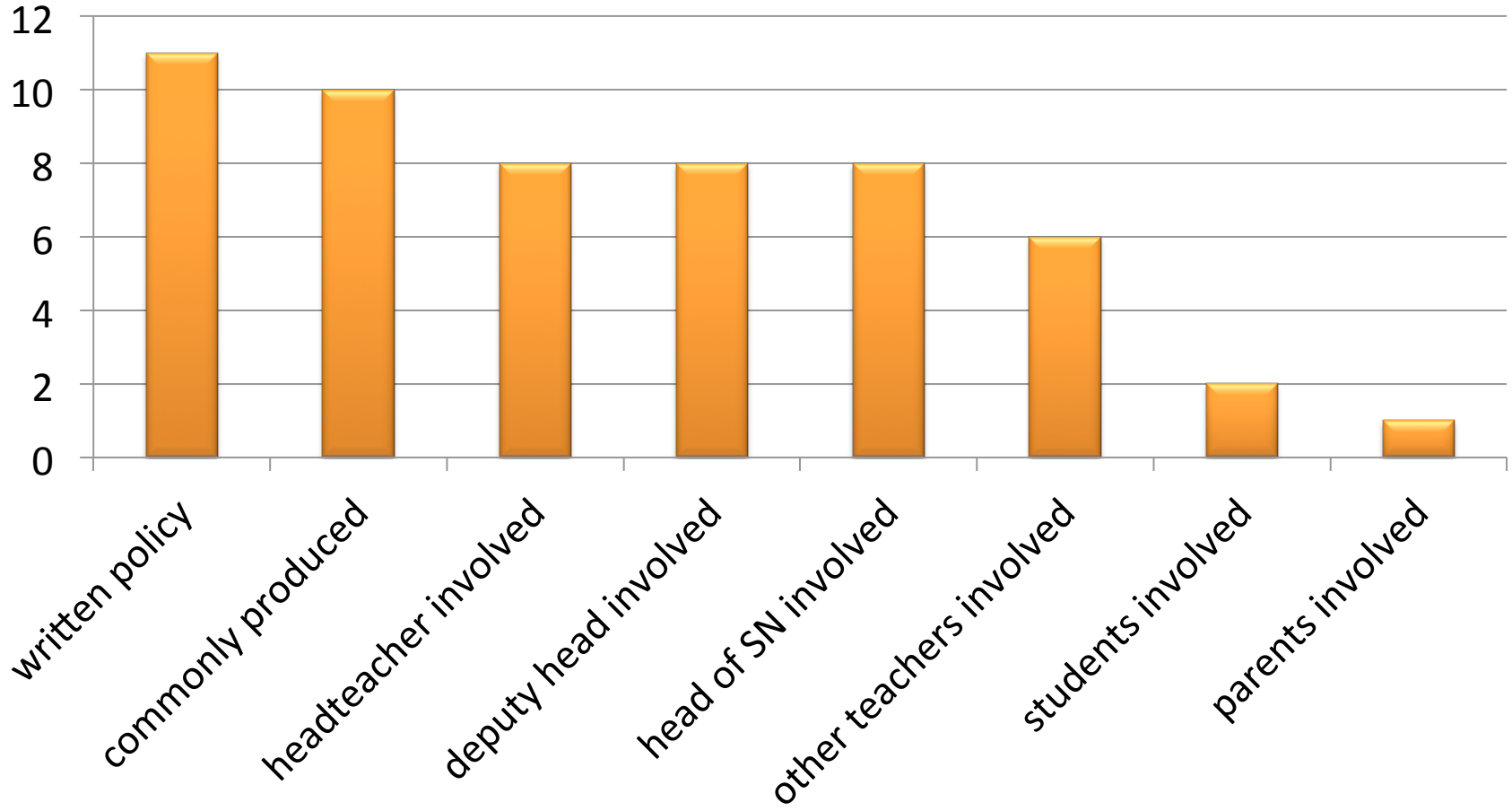
**Best Practice**

- What is proving most effective and how can we share it?

# MANAGING SPECIAL NEEDS

- 14 schools work within national/regional guidelines (all but 1 find these helpful)
- All can identify who is responsible for Special Needs (Usually Headteacher or Special Needs Coordinator)
- 10 schools have someone whose primary responsibility is Special Needs
- 11 schools have a Special Needs Policy / Plan and nearly all make special plans for individual students
- Schools are very different in their access to professional support

# SN POLICIES AND PLANS



# MAKING PLANS FOR INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS

**Schools involve the following:**

- Special Needs Co-ordinator (10)
- Student (10)
- Parent(s) (9)
- Headteacher (6)

Others include physician / psychologist / Head of Subject / class teacher / study counsellor

**USUALLY AT LEAST 3 / 4 INVOLVED**

# ACCESS TO PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

**School based or very local**

- Psychologist (11)
- SN specialist (8)
- Doctor (6)
- Nurse (5)
- Speech Therapist (2)

+ individually

Counsellor / opthamologist / physiotherapist / ENT specialist / Maths. Counsellor / reading-writing counsellor

**National or Local Authorities**

- Psychologist (16)
- SN specialist (12)
- Doctor (13)
- Speech Therapist (12)
- Psychiatrist (1)

Most have access to at least 3 of these specialists

# TRAINING

**Training availability**

As well as specialist professional support, schools report training being available in the following areas

- Dyslexia (15)
- Dyscalculia (11)
- AD(H)D (12)
- ASD (12)
- Exceptional Giftedness (8)

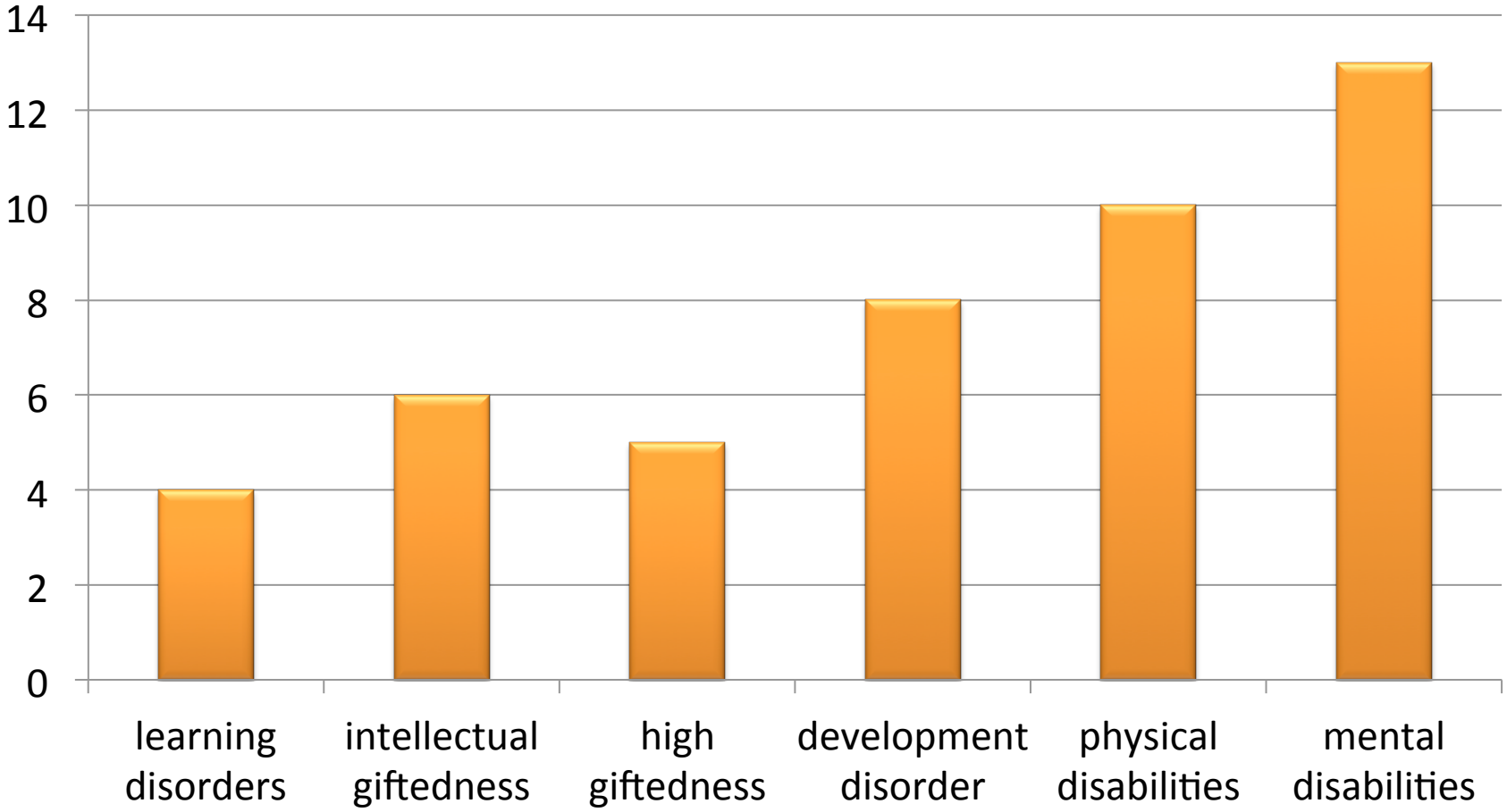
**Training Quality**

- 11 schools say that available training is very good or good with only one saying it is poor

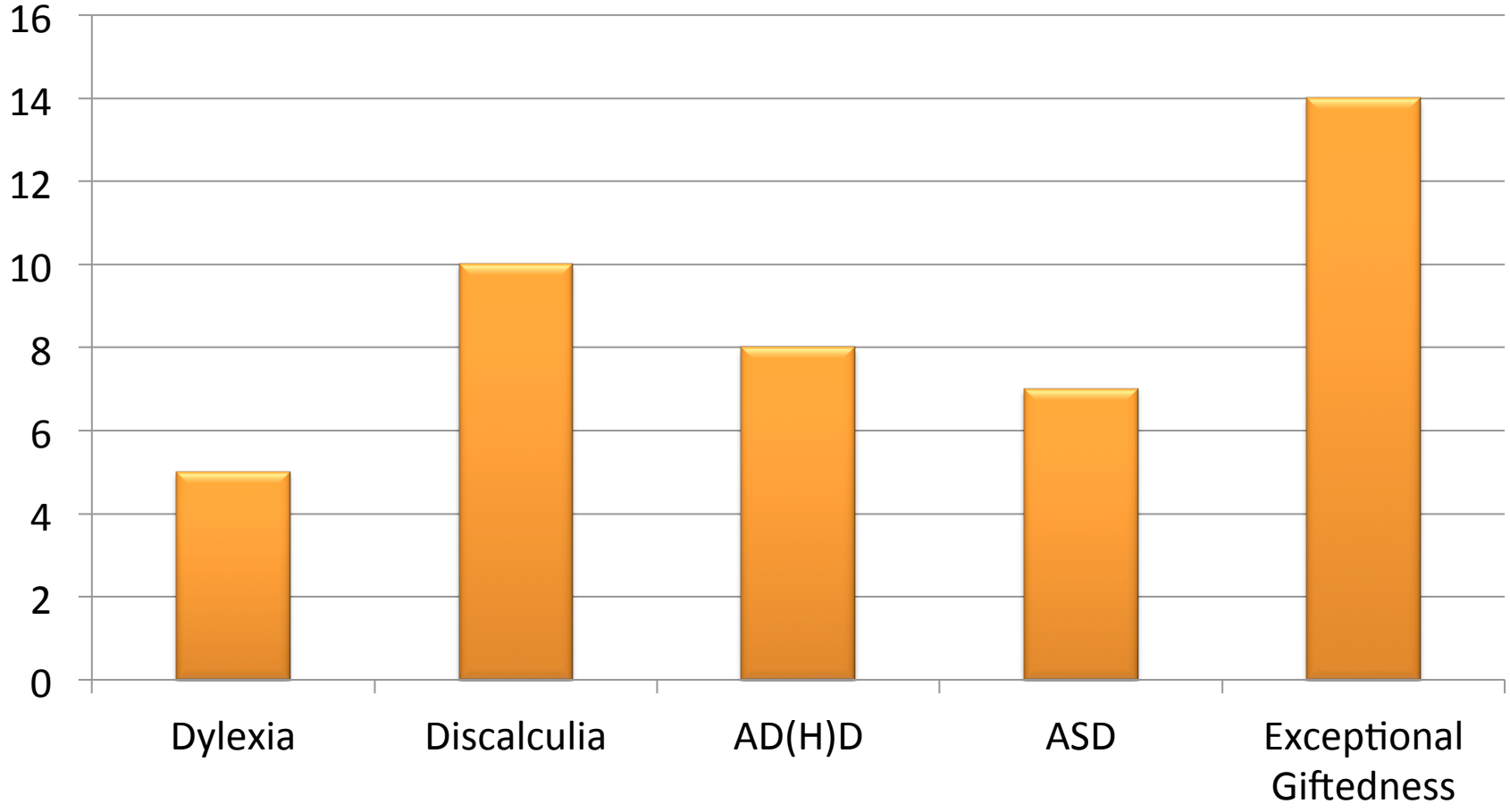
+

- 1 school says such training is just beginning and it is too early to judge quality
- 1 school reports that training is available for Teaching Assistants

# SPECIAL NEEDS CATERED FOR IN SPECIAL SCHOOLS



# IDENTIFIED NEEDS FOR GREATER EXPERTISE



# SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- How important is it to have one person whose primary responsibility is for Special Needs?
- How important is it to have a written SN Policy? Who should be involved in writing it?
- How can links with external specialists be made most effective?
- Some external support systems seem excellent. Are there some we should try to get adopted more widely?
- How can schools make Special Needs provision even better?
- What more can our network do to help improve Special Needs provision – in our own schools and others?