

# Mini Asset Assessment Profile

These notes are intended to provide clarification of some of the terms and concepts used in *mini Asset*. Additional guidance on the individual elements of *Asset* can be found in the explanatory notes that accompany the full version of the assessment profile - these notes should be consulted when further and more detailed guidance on *Asset* is required.

## Using *Asset* in practice

*Mini Asset* is designed to be used with young people at the early stages of a pattern of offending behaviour. There are currently no agreed guidelines or requirements as to when it should be used in Scotland so it is up to teams to decide locally how best to use it. Full *Asset* should still be used if the circumstances of the case or the situation of a young person are particularly complicated. There are no strict guidelines on this point but it should be decided on a case by case basis using your professional judgement and taking account of any relevant team procedures or protocols.

A *mini Asset* assessment will require you to engage in interviews with a young person and his/her family, obtain information from a range of other sources and make a series of judgements about the factors which affect his/her offending behaviour.

*Asset* should **not** be used as an interview schedule, but it will clearly be important to keep the *Asset* framework in mind throughout the assessment. Some teams are likely to have staff with specialist knowledge who can provide advice and assistance regarding particular sections of *Asset* e.g. health, education or substance use. Although the overall responsibility for completing *Asset* in any given case is likely to rest with one individual, a number of different people may all contribute to the assessment process.

## Page One

The first page contains factual information on the young person, the offence/s, care history and so on. Attempts should be made to consult a range of sources in order to obtain and verify the information.

### **Ethnic classification**

This is the classification for the 2001 census. It is acknowledged that the categories are quite broad and that some young people may wish to classify themselves more specifically e.g. 'Scottish' rather than just 'British'. In addition, the categories do not easily accommodate certain groups e.g. travellers. In such cases, please tick the box that most closely applies to him/her and use the space underneath the 'any other' box to give additional information. There is also an opportunity to state that this information was not obtainable, for example because the young person refused to classify themselves.

### **Gravity Score**

A new scale for grading offences relevant to young people in Scotland is currently being prepared and will be included in the guidance once available.

### **Offence Summary**

Provide a brief summary of the offence(s), including such details as where the offence took place, time of the offence, whether or not they committed the offence alone. Information on the victim should be provided in the next section.

### **Victims**

The purpose of this section is to analyse the offender's behaviour and is NOT an assessment of the victim. Tick all the options that apply to the current offence/s (i.e. current index offence and any additional offences). Leave the section blank if none of them apply at this particular time.

### **Impact and effect on victim**

Details of the victim and the effect the offence had on them and their life should be detailed here. The views of the victim are especially important when the potential for reparation work is considered.

### **Care history**

Use the 'details' box to give information about aspects of his/her care history – the focus should be on recent events but information about past situations can be included if you think it relevant.

### **Criminal history**

Past criminal behaviour can be a very strong predictor of future criminal behaviour and it is important to record this information in regard to each young person. Please circle the appropriate response for each of the questions.

### **Time since last reprimand, caution or warning**

This refers to the time since s/he was last reprimanded/cautioned/warned for any previous offences. If s/he has been previously reprimanded/cautioned/warned at any time within the last '3 months', circle this option. If the offence occurred between 6 and 12 months ago, e.g. 9 months ago, you should circle '12 months' etc. If s/he has committed no previous offences, circle N/A.

### **Information sources**

Please tick **all** those that apply. It is important for other people who may pick up the case to know what information your assessment was based on and to be aware of any significant information that was not available to you when completing *Asset*. This can also help to highlight issues about information that is routinely unavailable to teams.

## **Pages Two and Three**

Mini *Asset* follows the same structure as full *Asset* and asks you to consider the same range of risks, needs and positive factors. It asks for less specific information but still requires you to give ratings for each of the *Asset* sections and to provide evidence for your professional judgments.

### **Ratings**

Using the information you accumulate on the young person and their situation, you are asked to rate the extent to which you think each *Asset* section is associated with the likelihood of further offending by that young person. Examples of issues to consider in each section are provided on the form but more detailed illustrations can be found in the explanatory notes that accompany the full version of *Asset*. It is **not** an overall assessment of the extent to which a section is problematic. It is very specifically focused on **offending** and requires you to make a judgement about the link between the problems you have identified and the likelihood of him/her re-offending. When giving a rating it may be helpful to consider the following questions.

- Was this issue linked to past offending? If 'yes', do you think it is more or less significant now?
- Is it a direct or an indirect link with his/her offending?

- Is it always relevant to his/her offending behaviour or only on certain occasions?
- Is the effect on offending behaviour likely to be immediate or over a longer period?
- Is this issue problematic enough to lead to offending by itself or is it only likely to contribute to offending behaviour when certain other conditions exist?

The extent to which a section is associated with the likelihood of further offending is rated on a 0-4 scale.

- 0 Not associated at all.
- 1 Slight, occasional or only a limited indirect association.
- 2 Moderate but definite association. Could be a direct or indirect link. May be related to some offending, but not all. Tends to become offending related when combined with other factors.
- 3 Quite strongly associated. Normally a direct link, relevant to most types/occasions of his/her offending.
- 4 Very strongly associated. Will be clearly and directly related to any offending by the young person. Will be a dominant factor in any cluster of offending-related problems.

### **Evidence boxes**

The evidence box provides the opportunity for further details to be provided in those sections deemed as problem areas. If a rating given for a particular section is two or above the evidence box should be used to provide details of why this judgment was made. Evidence is important because it shows the basis for your decisions and judgements. It also enables you to explain the complexity of a young person's situation and elaborate on the key issues.

### **Positive factors**

As well as assessing problems, it is clearly important to identify the positive aspects of the young person's life. This is essential for building up a complete picture of the young person and will also help to identify factors that may be relevant to him/her stopping offending. Sometimes there may be just one positive factor amidst a range of problems. A young person experiencing severe difficulties at school may have a good relationship with one particular teacher for example. Similarly, in a family setting there might be one relationship that has a stabilising influence on the young person. As with the rest of the *Asset* profile, this section is asking for *your* assessment of the positive factors in the young person's life. This may differ from his/her perception and you may wish to use the evidence box to elaborate on the reasons for this. If you cannot identify *any* positive factors for this young person, it would be helpful to put a note of explanation. If a colleague then looks at the case, they will know that these issues have been considered

### **Indicators of Vulnerability**

This section focuses on the possibility of the **young person being harmed** – either physically or emotionally. When making your assessment in this area you should give consideration to issues such as whether there is evidence that the young person is likely to be vulnerable to harm as a result of the behaviour of other people, events/circumstances or his/her own behaviour and whether there are any indications that the young person is at risk of self-harm or suicide. More detailed guidance surrounding these issues can be found in the explanatory notes that accompany the full version of *Asset*.

### **Indicators of Serious Harm to others**

It is unlikely that at the Final Warning stage a young person would exhibit a risk of **serious harm to other people** but the possibility should not be ruled out and serious consideration should be given to his/her likelihood of causing serious harm to others through their own behaviour in the future. Serious harm is defined in ASSET as follows:

**Serious harm means death *or* injury (either physical or psychological) which is life threatening and/or traumatic and from which recovery is expected to be difficult, incomplete or impossible.**

Consideration could be given to behaviour by the young person that resulted in serious harm actually being caused or behaviour which indicates that s/he was intending or preparing to cause serious harm. His/her attitudes and motives for the current offence could be explored, as could their current interests or activities. Attention could also be given to any concerns about possible harmful behaviour expressed by the young person or by other people.

*Asset* uses the ‘indicators of serious harm to others’ section as a filter to identify cases where further in-depth risk assessment is required. Any concerns raised in this section should be explored further in the ‘risk of serious harm: full assessment’. This ensures that key enquiries about harm are considered in relation to all young people, whilst the time and resources required for the ‘**risk of serious harm: full assessment**’ are reserved for the minority of cases where this is a significant issue. If there are no indications of a risk of harm, you do not need to make any additional assessment at this stage. *It should be remembered that raising concerns in this section does not mean that you are labelling the young person as ‘high risk’. It is simply saying that there are concerns about a possible risk of serious harm to others which need further consideration and analysis.*

Further guidance on this area and on the use of the ‘risk of serious harm: full assessment’ can be found in the explanatory notes that accompany the full version of *Asset*.

### **Page Four**

The conclusion provides a summary of the assessment and requires you to outline the action that needs to be taken. There needs to be a link between *Asset* and any further work with the young person, otherwise the assessment will be of only limited value. The proposals given in this conclusion should therefore be the foundation for any future intervention or supervision.

### **Summary of ratings from sections 1-12**

This provides an easily accessible summary of the offending-related ratings from sections 1-12. It will clearly show which sections have higher ratings and these are the issues which should be addressed in question (c) which asks you to specify proposed interventions for reducing offending.

### **Is intervention being proposed?**

Whilst it is expected that the majority of young people being assessed will receive some form of supervision or intervention, there will also be some cases where this may not be appropriate or necessary. Where this is the case, please use the evidence box to explain why intervention is not being proposed.

### **Proposed intervention to reduce offending**

It will not be feasible to address all of the offending-related factors at the same time so this question asks you to prioritise the areas that most need to be addressed during a period of intervention. This will normally reflect the summary in question (a) and the proposals should address those issues which have the highest ratings.

### **Key positive factors**

Giving clear details in this section will help to ensure that the proposed intervention supports and develops the positive aspects of his/her life. It also reduces the possibility of positive factors being inadvertently undermined by a particular programme or intervention. This could happen, for example, if the young person is required to attend a programme at a time when s/he would normally be visiting a significant family member or taking part in some constructive out-of-school activity.

### **Are there other issues – not directly related to offending – which need to be addressed?**

This question reflects the fact that *Asset* encompasses a broad range of issues, including some which may not be directly related to the young person's offending, but which are still important for him/her. Please use this section to give details of any such issues which need to be addressed e.g. obtaining access to health care services.

## **Review or Case Closure – Summary**

The final page of mini ASSET can be used either at the end of a period of supervision or to review progress whilst an intervention is ongoing. Re-assessing a young person after a period of supervision can be a useful way to measure progress. If the young person later re-offends, the information provided in the re-assessment may help your colleagues in any future work with this young person. Some brief guidelines on the information required are shown below:

### **Has the young person engaged well with this intervention?**

The level of motivation at this stage may be an indicator of his/her willingness to engage with any future interventions. It may help to explain why this initial intervention was/was not successful and help you to assess the effectiveness of this programme of work.

### **Have there been any difficulties in arranging programmes?**

It is realised that programmes may not be very easy to organise and co-ordinate, especially if they only run at certain times. It would be useful to make a note of any such difficulties to provide evidence of the need for more programmes in the future or for changes to the existing schedules.

### **Have there been any referrals to other agencies?**

Any issues passed on to other agencies should be highlighted and detailed here. This will again enable staff on any future contact to see what referrals were made and why. It will also be an important record of intervention on behalf of the young person. Other agencies may include drug support, child protection, housing associations, careers advice etc.

### **Are you aware of any re-offending by the young person?**

Primarily this should include any offences for which the young person has been convicted or charged. It should be at the discretion of the *Asset* author to decide whether any other offences they know about should be included in this section. It may be that the young person has disclosed an offence which should be made known to other staff working with the young person in the future.

**Please re-score the following sections based on your *current* knowledge of the young person.**

Even if you only work with a young person for a short period of time it is likely that you will know more about them when they leave than when they arrived for a first assessment. It is important to leave any files on the young person as up to date as possible for the benefit of colleagues who may work with him/her in the future and so that any positive (or negative) changes in his/her situation can be assessed. If a score has changed then evidence relating to this change should be provided. These changes may be due to further disclosure by the young person or a positive outcome to an intervention for example.

**Have there been any changes in the assessment of vulnerability/serious harm to others?**

If there have been any changes in these areas it should be noted here as further action may need to be taken by other agencies to protect the young person/other people.