

## **Multi-agency assessment of support needs overseas (MASO) Information Leaflet**

This leaflet outlines the process to be followed, prior to an overseas assignment and in accordance with MOD Policy; Assessment of Support Needs for Accompanied Assignments Overseas<sup>1</sup> and Elective Home Education 2023DIN01-105<sup>2</sup>, for assessing the support needs of children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) and/or all children accessing/intending to access Elective Home Education (EHE).

### **1. What is the purpose of a multi-agency assessment (MASO)?**

A multi-agency assessment is carried out to confirm whether the necessary resources and provision are available in an overseas location, to support children with additional needs. It also gives education, health and social care teams time to prepare for the child's arrival to support smooth transitions.

The process will also be used to assess the support needs of all children where parents intend to EHE in the overseas area.

### **2. When is a multi-agency assessment (MASO) required?**

A MASO is required when:

- There is a safeguarding concern.
- A person has multiple low-level needs or there are a number of agencies involved in meeting these needs (for example a person is receiving care and support from local authority/equivalent services; has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP); or
- Has significant need in one area which may be supportable but may impact on another area of needs/areas of need (for example a medical need impacting on social care and/or child's education), on family life or the undertaking of the assignment/transfer.
- Where parents are considering Elective Home Education.
- Where there is a change in circumstances whilst in the overseas area requiring a re-assessment of support needs.

### **3. How is a MASO raised?**

All children **(0-18)**, accompanying their parents on an overseas assignment, require an assessment of support needs leading to DCS Confirmation of Supportability (see DCS Assessment of Support Needs - Information Leaflet 100 for further details).

For all overseas areas, parents must complete OES Form 101 and send it to:

- the receiving DCS School/Setting, or
- the Overseas Education & Supportability (OES) team (if no DCS School/Setting provision is available).

DCS will request that your child's current school complete the OES Form 102 (for children 5-18) or OES Form 103 (for children 0-5), or OES Form 104 (for children currently in EHE – to be completed by the parent). Depending on the content received, DCS will gather additional information, as required.

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<sup>1</sup> [MOD Policy Assessment of Support Needs for Accompanied Assignments Overseas.pdf](#)

<sup>2</sup> [2023DIN01-105-Elective Home Education Overseas.docx](#)

Once gathered, if a multi-agency assessment (MASO) is required, DCS will then raise this with the Decision Maker in the overseas location.

#### **4. What additional information may be required for the MASO?**

Up-to-date reports and assessments (e.g. School Report, Speech & Language Therapy, Educational Psychology, outreach workers or CAMHS etc). Depending on the contents of the OES Forms 102, 103 or 104, you or your child's school may be required to provide additional documentation or information.

#### **5. Who is the Decision Maker?**

Responsibility for the health, safety, welfare, discipline and administration of personnel and their families is invested in the designated commander overseas. This responsibility arises from the commander's delegated authority and necessarily includes making decisions on whether Service/MOD Civilian personnel with family members who wish to go on an accompanied assignment/transfer, can be supported in the overseas location. Commanders may choose to delegate this responsibility to a named individual or individuals in their staff.

This person is the 'decision maker' and is the person with the authority to make decisions on supportability.

#### **6. How long will the assessment take?**

A MASO can take up to 9 weeks to complete, once all the required paperwork has been gathered. For this reason, it is important for families to begin the assessment of support needs process as soon as they are aware of their assignment (please note: DCS Confirmation of Supportability will only be issued 6 months prior to the assignment).

**Important Note: Families should not proceed with an assignment until they have received the outcome of the full assessment of support needs process.**

#### **7. Who is involved in the MASO?**

The multi-agency assessment involves Command and professionals from education, health and other partner agencies. Depending on a child's needs, this may include but is not limited to:

Chain of Command/Overseas Local Command (Decision Maker):

- Sending and receiving.

Education:

- DCS Schools.
- DCS Specialist Services (e.g., Educational Psychology, Speech & Language, Education Advisors, Safeguarding etc).

Health & Social Care (as appropriate):

- Overseas SMOs and/or Global Medical Practice, Central European Team.
- Supporting agencies e.g., SSAFA (including Health Visitors, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services – CAMHS, Speech and Language Therapy etc).
- Social Care (e.g., British Forces Social Work Service, as needed).

#### **8. How is a decision made?**

The Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) mentioned above will consider the documentation that has been provided and offer their professional view to the Decision Maker about whether a child's needs can be met overseas.

The Decision Maker will convene a panel meeting to discuss and inform their final decision. They will then notify the Service Person/MOD Civilian, and all involved of the outcome (wherever possible, within 5 working days of the panel meeting) providing information re: appeals.

#### **9. What if a Service family is not happy with the decision?**

Parents may appeal the decision, and details of how to do this will be shared within the outcome circulated by the Decision Maker (this usually includes that appeals should be in writing, providing new evidence and sent to the Decision Maker directly).

The Appeal process will follow a similar pattern as the MASO process. In the event of an appeal, a review panel will usually be convened with independent personnel not involved with the original supportability decision to ensure impartiality.

#### **10. Are many Service families advised not to move overseas?**

Families will only be advised not to take up an overseas assignment when the resources and support required to meet a child's needs are not available in the overseas location or they would be disadvantaged by a posting overseas.

Early knowledge of a child's needs will help services to prepare for the child's arrival overseas and ensure a smooth transition and continuity of education, health and social care provision.

#### **11. How can Service families find out more information about Assessments of Support Needs?**

For all overseas areas you can contact the OES team for further information:

##### **Overseas Education & Supportability (OES) team**

Defence Children Services (DCS)  
Specialist Support Services  
Upavon, Wiltshire

Email: [RC-DCS-HQ-OES@mod.gov.uk](mailto:RC-DCS-HQ-OES@mod.gov.uk)