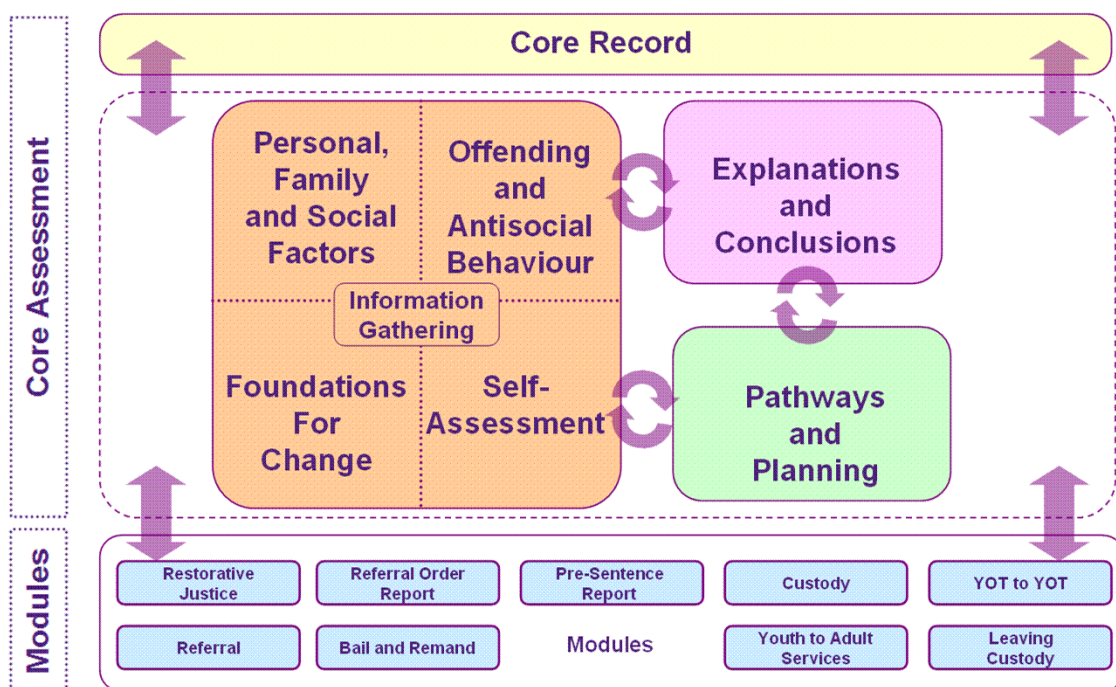# 2. Using AssetPlus

2.1 AssetPlus Overview

2.1.1 AssetPlus framework structure

The AssetPlus framework consists of the following sections and modules (Figure 1):

Figure 1(a): AssetPlus framework structure

There is no specific order of completion for AssetPlus and no set starting point, however it is recommended that practitioners start with the speech, language, communication and neuro-disability screening tool and self-assessments. The AssetPlus 'core assessment' sections will be applicable to all cases and comprise of the following:

Core Record

The purpose of this section is to provide a summary of the essential information required about the young person (primarily pre-populated from other areas of the core assessment framework). It includes and provides the following:

- information about critical points identified relating to needs, safeguarding and public protection,

- key action points from the young person's intervention plan; and,

- a summary of key information about the young person, ensuring that practitioners and managers have the most up to date information to hand.

10

Information Gathering

This section facilitates the identification of key factors affecting a young person's life (both positive and negative).

It includes:

- personal, family and social factors,

- offending/anti-social behaviour,

- foundations for change; and,

- self-assessment.

Within sections, additional 'further exploration' questions allow for flexibility in the completion of AssetPlus and the ability to match the level of detail with the complexity of the case.

Explanations and Conclusions

This section provides the opportunity for practitioners to review and analyse all the information gathered (i.e. drawing together all the different strands and looking at the interaction between factors) in order to explain the young person's behaviour in the context of their life situation. This analysis then enables the practitioner to make judgements about the risk of reoffending, the risk of future harmful behaviour and the young person's safety and well-being in the short to medium term.

Pathways and Planning

This section allows for practitioners to create a single intervention plan and helps to identify priority pathways out of offending. The structure of Pathways and Planning ensures that the detail of intervention planning is clearly linked to achieving specified outcomes for a young person. Planning, in order to manage risks to others and risks to the young person's safety and well-being, is also covered in this section.

Modules

During case management, there are specific tasks and processes that need to be carried out at particular points during a young person's involvement with the youth justice system (for example, transferring information to the YJB Placement Service, or completing a Pre-Sentence Report). Discrete modules have been incorporated into the framework to fulfil this purpose, but not all will be applicable to all cases. The modules are outlined below:

- **Bail and Remand**

The core assessment framework has been aligned to accommodate the level of assessment required for a bail assessment (therefore reducing unnecessary duplication). This information is presented in the Bail and Remand module to address the objections to bail and recommend suitable bail packages to the court.

- **Reports: Pre-Sentence Report, Referral Order Report**

These are similar in structure to the current reports and practitioners will have the option of pre-populating relevant sections of the report from the young person's assessment.

- **Custody**

This module, pre-populated by the main framework where appropriate, is to be completed when the assessment and relevant placement information are required by YJB Placement Service. It

also includes a section for completion by the secure establishment upon the young person's arrival. It aims to provide the secure establishment with key information when a young person arrives in custody, including identification of risk to the young person's safety and the risk of harmful behaviour to others.

- **Leaving Custody**

This module enables the recording of all required release information and arrangements and the supports the generation of the appropriate Notice of Supervision/Licence for the young person.

- **Transfers (between YOTs or to adult services)**

These modules include relevant questions in order to facilitate case transfers.

- **Referrals**

This module is populated with relevant information from the main framework in order to facilitate referrals.

- **Restorative Justice**

The Restorative Justice (RJ) module is a compulsory module triggered from the Pathways and Planning section of the framework. The majority of the module will be pre-populated with responses from elsewhere in the framework, bringing together relevant information about the young person's attitudes to offending, the victim and response to previous RJ interventions, as well as any identified priorities for repairing harm. Additional questions within the module itself will encourage practitioners to think about any specific victim safety concerns and the young person's views about possible RJ interventions. It is intended that the RJ module will act as a precursor to more detailed, local RJ assessments undertaken by victim or RJ workers. The module should provide information to assist decision-making regarding suitability for the full range of RJ interventions.

2.1.2 AssetPlus as an end-to-end framework

Young people should be given the full benefit of the AssetPlus assessment and planning framework regardless of how they come to the notice of the supervisory organisation or how long they are intended to be with them.

The following table lists the sub-sections and modules within the framework that have been mandated (i.e. compulsory; as determined by the YJB) and those where completion is a local decision:

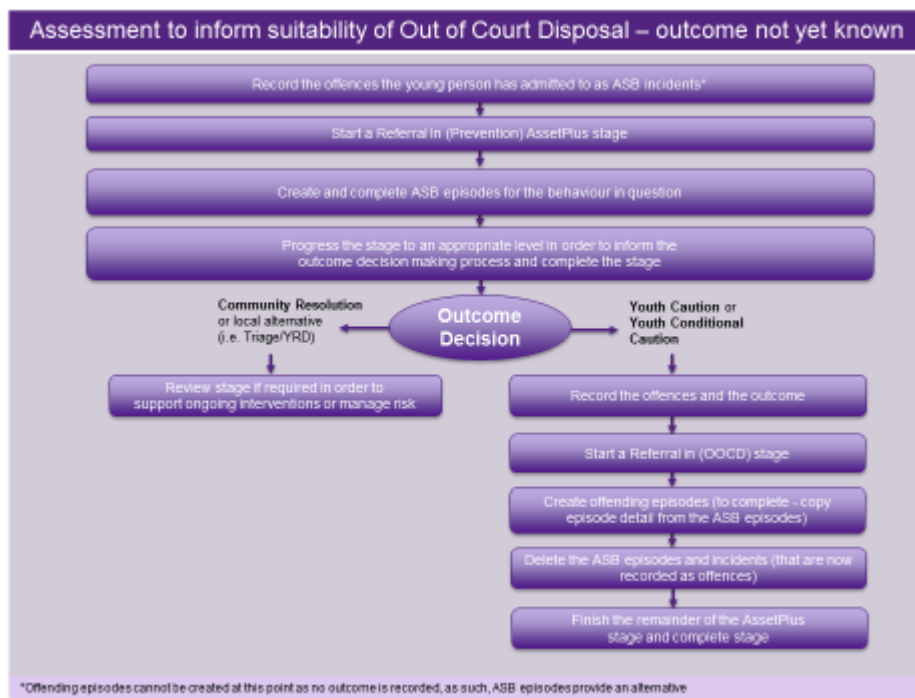Table 2: Mandated sections of AssetPlus

Compulsory areas in AssetPlus	Areas in AssetPlus for local discretion

- Screening tools in the personal, family and social factors section of Information Gathering:
 	
  o Mental and physical health screening questions
 	
  o Speech, language, communication and neuro-disability screening tool
 	
  o Alcohol screening tool
 	
- Young person and parent/carer self-assessment questionnaires
	- Pre-Sentence Report
	
	- Referral Order Panel Report
	
	- Referral module
	
	- The use of AssetPlus for triage and prevention cases

• Pathways and Planning • Restorative Justice module • Bail and Remand, Custody and Leaving Custody modules (when applicable) • Transfer modules	

2.1.2.1 Young people subject to out-of-court disposals (OOCD)

AssetPlus is mandated under YJB National Standards for Youth Justice Services for young people subject to out-of-court disposals (Youth Cautions and Youth Conditional Cautions). It can also be used to determine OOCD suitability and whether an intervention is required (see below) although in practice YOTs have used locally developed assessment/screening tools for this purpose and this is expected to continue. If a YOT decides to deliver an intervention for an OOCD (other than solely a Restorative Justice intervention), the YOT is expected to undertake an assessment and must use the AssetPlus framework in line with National Standards.

Figure 1(b): The use of AssetPlus to inform suitability for Out of Court Disposal

For all young people where an assessment is conducted it should be proportionate and appropriate for that young person, which relies on practitioners' professional judgement to determine which elements of the assessment are relevant for the young person's circumstances. Where questions are not applicable for a young person, which will vary on a case by case basis, a response is not expected. The AssetPlus framework has also been designed to expand or contract based on the complexity and breadth of the young person's needs and not based on the programme they are engaging in. It uses a further exploration feature to identify whether or not additional questions are required to record more detailed information on a particular topic. This type of question is used throughout the framework, particularly to expand on concerns or issues in relation to the young person.

Additionally, AssetPlus will adapt automatically for out-of-court disposal cases when using the specific "Referral In (OOCD)" stage and certain questions for example Scaled Approach intervention levels will not be present when using this stage. The process of information gathering, drawing conclusions and planning to achieve outcomes will however remain fundamentally the same in AssetPlus.

Strengthened consideration of restorative justice using the Restorative Justice (RJ) module will be particularly useful for young people subject to OOCD (where there is YOT involvement).

2.1.2.2 Young people subject to statutory community orders

AssetPlus is mandated under YJB National Standards for Youth Justice Services for young people subject to statutory community orders and young people subject to these orders are likely to represent the majority of those assessed and managed using AssetPlus.

AssetPlus has a number of community-specific stages which enable practitioners to complete specific tasks or reports as well as the main sections of the framework. These tasks and reports are contained in separately named modules. There is no order to the completion of these stages, and some stages allow access to more than one module, so there is some choice about which stage you choose. With some modules, you will be offered the choice of pre-population of selected sections from the main body of the assessment. Practitioners will need to consider whether that is helpful, for example, pre-population from the main body of the assessment may not help in the construction of a Pre-Sentence Report.

Please note that there is no separate Intensive Supervision and Surveillance suitability assessment built into AssetPlus, but this type of assessment can be electronically attached to the young person's AssetPlus assessment and/or other members of staff, such as ISS teams, can be assigned to complete areas of the assessment where relevant.

2.1.2.3 Young people in custody

AssetPlus will continue to be updated whilst the young person is in custody. Practitioners within the secure estate will be responsible for updating the relevant sections of the assessment and intervention plan whilst YOT practitioners will continue to retain overall case management responsibility including responsibility for any reviews of Asset Plus. Secure establishment staff do not make risk of serious harm or likelihood of reoffending judgements and they do not determine the overall level of concern for a young person's safety and well-being. Any review or amendment of these judgements must take place during a YOT update of AssetPlus. However, secure establishment staff will update risks (future behaviours and adverse outcomes) and YOT practitioners should take account of all of the latest information in relation to these when making judgements.

The specific detail around the shared responsibility between the YOT and secure estate practitioners is to be determined locally. There are three specific stages that are used during the time when the young person is in custody and moving through their planning process; entering custody, review and pre-release. Those stages generate the Custody and Leaving Custody modules which are key in this phase as they provide mechanisms to make a secure placement, support development of licence conditions and outline the community and custody risks for the young person.

2.1.2.4 Young people engaged through triage or with prevention interventions

AssetPlus replaces the Onset referral and assessment framework for prevention cases and brings both prevention and statutory cases into one unified framework. The AssetPlus

framework is not compulsory for use with prevention or triage, but there are a number of benefits in using it for these cases:

1. Starting an AssetPlus assessment at the first opportunity will allow for practitioners and services to build a solid foundation of assessment and planning which can then be extended and developed as their knowledge of a young person increases.
2. Using AssetPlus for prevention and/or triage cases would result in less duplication of effort to add information in a prevention assessment into AssetPlus if the young person goes on to offend.
3. Historical anti-social behaviour information for that young person relevant to patterns of behaviour and trend analysis would be available within AssetPlus should the young person go on to offend.

Triage and non-substantive cases, where the young person has admitted guilt, can be entered into AssetPlus as anti-social behaviour in order that the practitioner can complete analysis at the point the young person receives a non-substantive outcome. If an arrest results in no further action (NFA) but the behaviour is indicative of further harmful behaviour or offending then this should be captured in the anti-social behaviour and offending (other behaviours of concern) section.

For all young people where an assessment is conducted it should be proportionate and appropriate for that young person, which relies on practitioners' professional judgement to determine which elements of the assessment are relevant for the young person's circumstances. Where questions are not applicable for a young person, which will vary on a case by case basis, a response is not expected. The AssetPlus framework has also been designed to expand or contract based on the complexity and breadth of the young person's needs and not based on the programme they are engaging in. It uses a further exploration feature to identify whether or not additional questions are required to record more detailed information on a particular topic. This type of question is used throughout the framework, particularly to expand on concerns or issues in relation to the young person.

Additionally, AssetPlus will adapt automatically for prevention cases when using the specific "Referral in prevention)" stage and certain questions for example YOGRS and Scaled Approach intervention levels will not be present when using this stage. Any references to offending and sentences will also be replaced with the terms incidents and/or anti-social behaviour. The process of information gathering, drawing conclusions and planning to achieve outcomes will however fundamentally remain the same.

2.1.3 Reviewing and updating AssetPlus

AssetPlus allows for specific sections to be reviewed or updated without requiring revisions to the whole framework. This should encourage practitioners to maintain more up-to-date assessments and intervention plans. The structure of AssetPlus also facilitates more effective use of information when young people move through the youth justice system making updating assessments much more straightforward. AssetPlus should be reviewed at regular intervals and/or at the point of any significant event in the young person's life.

2.2 Key features and concepts in AssetPlus

2.2.1 Key AssetPlus features

There are a number of key features in AssetPlus which promote better and more effective completion of the assessment and plan:

- **Further exploration**

Rather than listing all potential questions and requiring answers to all of them, AssetPlus uses a further exploration feature to identify whether or not additional questions are required to record more detailed information on a particular topic. This type of question is used throughout the framework, particularly to expand on concerns or issues in relation to the young person.

- **Yet to clarify responses**

  A yet to clarify response will emphasise that information is yet to be gathered and an action should be taken to investigate further.

- **Flag for further action**

  Practitioners may want to flag particular things for consideration when they reach the planning stage, e.g. the need for another assessment or for referral to a specialist. This feature contributes towards the improvement of links between assessments and plans. Practitioners will identify flags for action throughout their information gathering.

- **Add significant life event**

  A significant life event is an incident which impacts upon a young person's physical, psychological, social or environmental well-being, either positively or negatively. The practitioner should use this information to aid formulation of a 'picture' of the young person's life and when identifying any links between significant life events and offending/anti-social behaviour. Practitioners will identify significant life events throughout their information gathering.

- **Add desistance factor**

  Desistance factors are factors that are influential in promoting or hindering desistance. Practitioners will identify desistance factors throughout their information gathering.

- **Reference to young person self-assessment**

  The self-assessments are designed to collate views from the young person at various stages in the youth justice system. They are therefore no longer static forms but are dynamic in that the questions will change depending on the stage the young person is at. Practitioners should refer to self-assessment throughout their assessment.

- **Attaching documents**

  The practitioner should upload and attach relevant documents (in MS Word, Excel, Outlook, PDF and jpeg formats, etc.) at various points throughout AssetPlus. Organisations and practitioners should be aware of their local data protection policies regarding what information they attach, retain and share.

- **Printing**

  It is possible to print the full framework, print a section or module or print at sub-section level across the whole framework, including the young person friendly Intervention Plan as required. Practitioners can print the Intervention Plan to enable physical signatures and then scan and upload it as an attachment.

- **Data sharing**

  A central premise of AssetPlus is to be able to enter information in only once to increase consistency and reduce duplication through the reuse of data already available. This is achieved by the case management system pre-populating information automatically into AssetPlus (such as young person's details) or AssetPlus sections pre-populating other AssetPlus sections (such as risks identified in the Explanations and Conclusions section populating the risk flags in the Core Record).

- **Local configuration**

  This will be subject to the case management system, but the key area promoted by AssetPlus is the setting of specific criteria for managerial countersignature. Individual organisations should regularly review their local configuration approaches to ensure they remain effective and continue to meet local needs.

2.2.2 Key AssetPlus concepts

There are two key concepts to understand when using AssetPlus that are integral to its correct practical application:

1. using assessment stages to define the reason for assessment; and,

2. analysing incidents and offences using episodes.

2.2.2.1 Using assessment stages to define the reason for assessment

To make an update or a change to AssetPlus, practitioners will be required to select an assessment stage and owner.

Definition - Assessment stage
The **assessment stage** is a point in time where an update to AssetPlus is required. It describes the reason **why** the update is being made, e.g. "I need to complete a Pre-Sentence Report" will mean creating a Pre-Sentence Report stage.

Definition - Stage Owner/Proxy user
Each AssetPlus stage has a single **stage owner** who will be the practitioner that is responsible for completing the stage. The stage owner has overall responsibility for the stage including obtaining a countersignature, if it is required, and completing the stage. The stage owner is able to assign sections to other specialist practitioners for completion but it will remain their responsibility to ensure that this is done satisfactorily and within the timescales required. If the stage owner is unable to complete the stage due to illness or leave, a manager is able to stop the assessment stage which allows the new stage owner to create a new stage to complete the assessment.

A **proxy user** is a user that is able to start and complete an assessment stage on behalf of the stage owner. At the start of completing an assessment you need to identify if you will personally complete the full assessment or if others will support you. Those additional users that need to be given access to your assessment and/or plans for this purpose are known as proxy users. They can make amendments on your behalf at any point to any part of the framework. However, if a proxy user has started a stage you can override them if necessary in order to make any urgent updates. |
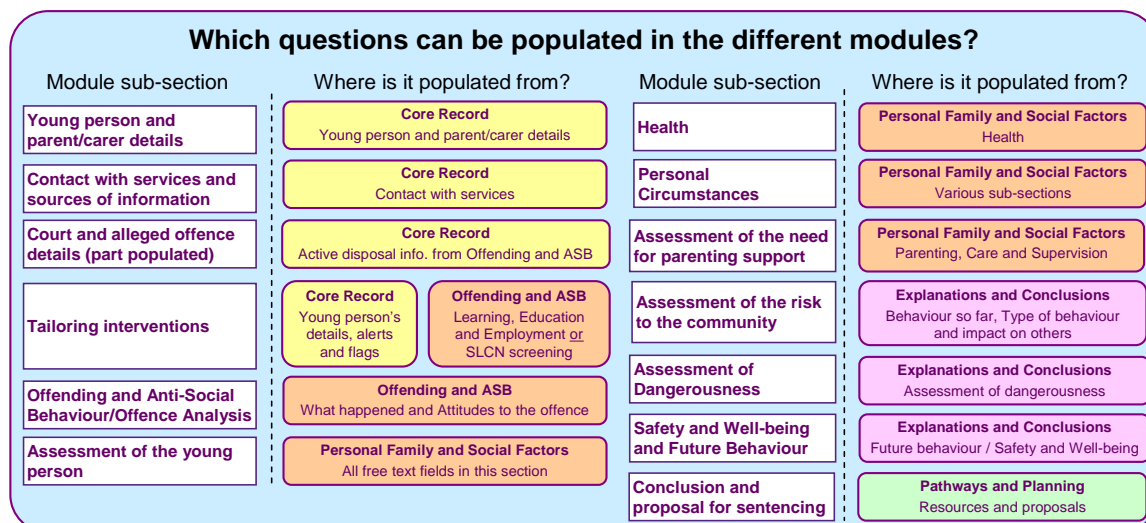
To make an update or change to AssetPlus, practitioners will be required to select an assessment stage first and, if applicable, a hearing or panel date. Only one stage can be open at any one time. The main sections of AssetPlus will always be displayed but the modules are only triggered for the stages that require them. The AssetPlus assessment stage triggers modules as follows in the table below:

Table 3: Assessment stage triggers of AssetPlus modules

Stage	When to use it	Modules Triggered
Referral In (Prevention)	To complete an initial assessment when the young person is referred for a prevention intervention	None
Referral In (OOCD)	To complete an initial assessment when the young person is referred for an out-of-court disposal	None
Placement Notification	To provide a notification to YJB Placement Service if the young person is at risk of entering custody for a young person being recalled or breach where there is a risk of custody	Custody
Bail Recommendation	To prepare a Bail Recommendation package for a young person appearing in court for a bail hearing and there is a risk of remand	Bail and Remand Custody
Sentenced (No Report)	When a young person is sentenced without a formal report to the court	None
Pre-Sentence Report	To prepare a Pre-Sentence Report for a young person where the outcome will be a community order	Pre-Sentence Report
Pre-Sentence Report (all options)	To prepare a pre-sentence report for a young person where the outcome could include a custodial sentence	Pre-Sentence Report Custody
Post-Court Report	To complete a Post-Court Report	Bail and Remand Custody (Post Court Report)
Referral Order Report	To complete a Referral Order Panel Report for an initial panel	Referral Order Panel Report
Pre-Release from Custody (YOT and secure estate)	To prepare for the young person's release from custody	Leaving Custody
Review (YOT and secure estate)	To complete a standard review or review based on change of circumstances	Referral Order Report (only if disposal is Referral Order)
Transfer to Probation	To complete a review in preparation for the young person transfer to adult services	Youth to Adult Services
Transfer YOT to YOT	To complete a review in preparation for the young person transfer to another YOT	YOT to YOT
Case Closure	To complete a final end of Intervention review	Referral Order Report (only if disposal is Referral Order)
Entering Custody **(Secure estate only)**	To complete a review when the young person arrives in a secure establishment	Custody

AssetPlus modules will be pre-populated from the main sections in the framework (Figure 2). Where the module is updated it will also automatically update the main sections of the framework.

Figure 2: AssetPlus module population

AssetPlus stages can have one of four statuses, either 'In-progress', 'Completed', 'Stopped' or 'Cancelled' as defined in the table below:

Table 4: AssetPlus stage statuses

Stage status	Description
In-progress	- An open stage where changes are being made. - It can be saved multiple times until the practitioner is ready to complete it.
Completed	- A stage can only be completed by the practitioner if: - All mandatory fields have been completed. - Managerial countersignatures have been obtained. - A snapshot of AssetPlus is taken once the stage has been completed which is then available as a historical record. - A completed stage cannot be re-opened. A new stage must be created for any new changes and further updates.
Stopped	- A stage can be stopped based on unexpected events (e.g. whilst in PSR stage the young person is arrested again and in court which would require a Bail Recommendation stage or the stage owner is off sick and updates to the assessment are required). - The practitioner will be prompted for a reason for why the stage was stopped. - If a stage is stopped a snapshot is still taken and any changes in that stage will be available in a new subsequent stage. - A stopped stage cannot be re-opened. A new stage must be created for any new changes and further updates.
Cancelled	- Cancelling a stage should only be done in exceptional circumstances – such as where information has been entered into the wrong young person's AssetPlus in error. - A stage can be cancelled if it is appropriate to do so. AssetPlus will revert to the last completed or stopped stage.

	• The practitioner will be prompted for a reason for why the stage has been cancelled, e.g. stage incorrectly started.
	• Cancelled stages will not be part of the historical record.
For the purpose of a "caretaking" arrangement the assessment stage could also have one of the following statuses:	
Completed awaiting Transfer	• Completed but not yet transferred to the other YOT or secure establishment.
Completed Transferred	• Transferred to the other YOT but not yet accepted or rejected. If technical transfer fails the status of the stage will default to Completed – awaiting transfer.
Completed Rejected	• Rejected by the other YOT.

Once a stage is completed or stopped, historical information cannot be changed or deleted. If information is later proved to be inaccurate (such as a malicious allegation that was treated as fact at the time) a new stage would need to be created and updated with changes.

2.2.2.2 Analysing incidents and/or offences[4] using episodes

AssetPlus is a single assessment and plan that handles the recording and analysing of all occurrences of anti-social behaviour and/or offences in a single framework by using episodes.

Definition – Episode

For the purposes of completing offence/incident analysis in AssetPlus, an episode is defined as a group of **related offences** (an offending episode) or **related incidents** (an anti-social behaviour episode).

The starting point for creating an offending episode in AssetPlus is when guilt for the offences is established. If the young person has been charged with offences but they have not yet pleaded or have pleaded 'not guilty' then these offences will remain in AssetPlus as **outstanding charges** until they are resolved by the court and will not be available to be placed into an episode. Any risks of harm or serious harm associated with outstanding charges should however still be factored into analysis in Explanations and Conclusions.

Offences and anti-social behaviour incidents will be pre-populated from the wider case management system where this data is entered. You may need to add any known anti-social behaviour incidents.

If the offence recorded against the young person has any of the following outcomes it will be removed from **outstanding charges** in AssetPlus and must not be considered for assessment purposes: **Withdrawn, Acquitted, Dismissed, Found 'not guilty', Not Proved, Not appropriate, Abandoned, Discontinued or NFA (No further action).** Where these are the only offences recorded for the young person in the case management system, the case will be treated as a prevention case in AssetPlus.

Offences and incidents will be categorised as either:

- **Outstanding (applicable for offences only)**

  An offence is outstanding where the young person has pleaded not guilty or has not entered a plea. Breaches and offences associated with remand cases are dealt with in this way until the young person is convicted. Anti-social behaviour incidents in prevention cases and out-of-court disposal offences in statutory cases will never be 'outstanding' and episodes can therefore be created straight away. Although outstanding offences are not analysed they must be considered in relation to risks, future behaviours and planning.

- **Current**

  An offence/incident is current when guilt has been established or admitted. The offence/incident will be displayed in the Offending and Anti-Social Behaviour in Core Record and be grouped into an episode for analysis. Current offences and incidents must also be analysed in separate episodes.

- **Historical**

  An offence/incident is historical where the associated intervention has ended, e.g. due to the young person successfully completing their intervention. If there is no associated intervention for an incident it can be made historical.

Once guilt has been established, practitioners can create an episode in the Core Record by grouping related incidents or offences together. Offences and anti-social behaviour incidents are always analysed separately so they **cannot** be grouped together in the same episode.

Offences or anti-social behaviour incidents should only be grouped together if there is sufficient similarity between them in terms of their circumstances and where the influences, motivations and attitudes of the young person can be analysed collectively. Offences that are grouped for the purpose of a hearing or order would not necessarily be considered a single episode if this does not apply.

Once the offences or incidents have been grouped into episodes, the episodes can then be analysed. This will include adding further details in the Offending and Anti-Social Behaviour section on characterising the offences/incidents and completing details of what happened.

Offence/incident episodes will also continue to remain flexible in AssetPlus. Offences can be added to existing episodes or removed and added to a different episode. Practitioners need to ensure that the analysis associated with the episode in the Offending and Anti-Social Behaviour section is updated if offences are added or removed in this way.

Once all interventions associated with all the offences in the episode are ended, the episode will become historical and can no longer be updated. Any offences associated to an immediately spent disposal will become historical once they have been analysed in an episode and the stage is completed.

2.3 Management Oversight

Management oversight has a significant role to play in the AssetPlus framework. It is crucial for the completion of high quality assessments and plans to ensure that the interventions delivered are appropriately targeted to reduce reoffending, protect the public and safeguard young people. YOT managers should strive for excellence in performance managing and quality managing this work[5].

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[5] Youth Justice Board Case Management Guidance (2014)

Within AssetPlus, management oversight is required in the form of countersignature and quality assurance of individual assessments and plans. AssetPlus advocates a collaborative approach between managers and practitioners to ensure that management oversight is as effective as possible in line with the level of emphasis now also placed in the framework on professional judgement. However, it is important to remember that effective management oversight is much wider than the AssetPlus framework itself and should form part of robust quality assurance processes (both at individual assessment and organisational levels), staff supervision and appraisal, organisational policies and procedures, service and workforce development and induction and training.[6]

2.3.1 Professional Judgement

AssetPlus has been designed to reflect the changing context for practice in which greater emphasis is now being placed on flexibility and the importance of professional discretion (Munro, 2011). There are several features in AssetPlus which support the use of professional judgement:

- **Further exploration questions**

  Further exploration ensures that the depth of assessment is managed by the young person's circumstances. The level of assessment will reflect the complexity of young person's personal circumstances and/or behaviour, ensuring a proportionate assessment.

- **Specialist screening tools and referrals**

  The screening tools are:

  - physical and mental health screening questions,

  - speech, language, communication and neuro-disability; and,

  - Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT).

  These are embedded into AssetPlus and can identify the need for further assessment or referral. The triggering of further referrals is left to practitioner judgement, although this should be informed by agreed organisational thresholds.

- **Graphs, tables and matrices**

  These allow details of previous offences, significant life events and contact with services to be displayed in graphical format to inform practitioner analysis of patterns and trends in a young person's life. Future behaviours and safety and well-being concerns are displayed in matrices to aid analysis and judgements.

- **Managerial countersignature**

  The emphasis on increased professional judgement in AssetPlus means that management oversight takes on additional importance: to support practitioners in the decisions they make and to seek to establish a consistent approach to judgements reached within AssetPlus at organisational level. Supervision and reflection should be used as a place to critically reflect, question options and to check for bias in practice and judgement making.

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[6] Further details about management oversight and quality assurance processes can be found in the Youth Justice Board Case Management Guidance and 'Some key principles for the effective management oversight of Risk of Harm to others and Safeguarding/Child Protection' published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation.

2.3.2 Managerial Countersignature

The managerial countersignature process runs in parallel to completion of an AssetPlus stage.

The countersignature process has three main purposes in AssetPlus:

1. it demonstrates that the content and quality of the assessment has been checked and agreed by a manager (or senior practitioner) in two key sections:

    o Explanations and Conclusions (which also includes Information Gathering sections); and,

    o Pathways and Planning

2. it represents the shared and collaborative responsibility (between individual practitioners and the wider organisation) for judgements made

3. it enables assessment stages within the case management system to be completed.

The following criteria should be considered as a basis for triggering the requirement for a manager's countersignature for the Explanations and Conclusions section:

- RoSH,

- indicative Likelihood of Reoffending (LoR),

- Likelihood of Reoffending (LoR),

- where there is a difference between indicative LoR and LoR (increase or decrease),

- overall safety and well-being concerns,

- future behaviour matrix impact and likelihood values,

- safety and well-being matrix impact and likelihood values,

- dangerousness assessment required,

- MAPPA category,

- specific offences: and,

- the young person currently has or previously had a child protection plan.

The following criteria should be considered as a basis for triggering the requirement for a manager's countersignature in the Pathways and Planning section:

- countersign all,

- countersign none,

- those cases where Explanations and Conclusions has been countersigned (as above): and,

- Scaled Approach intervention level (and where professional override has been applied to the Scaled Approach intervention level).

Once countersignature has been obtained the stage owner can complete the stage. If a manager has countersigned a section and the owner makes a further change to that section, countersignature will be required again before that stage can be completed.

2.3.3 AssetPlus Quality Assurance Tool

Quality assurance processes provide the opportunity for the organisation to ensure that the quality of the assessments and plans they produce is high. Quality assurance is not about ticking boxes as this approach is unlikely to assist in improving the quality of practice. In AssetPlus, quality assurance is designed to be a collaborative approach to improving the quality of practice between practitioners and managers.

An AssetPlus Quality Assurance Tool has been developed to act as a guide to assist managers in the scrutiny and audit of assessments and plans completed using AssetPlus. This will also be a useful tool for practitioners, particularly during the transition to AssetPlus and associated training. Whilst use of the tool is not compulsory, as a minimum it is expected that services will use it as a basis to develop their own quality assurance and audit tools to meet local needs and expectations around assessment and planning interventions.

The tool has been designed to align with the HMI Probation Inspection Criteria for Full Joint Inspections and Short Quality Screenings 2014 and therefore measures sufficiency. Each area of AssetPlus is quality assured and whilst there may be aspects of the work that could have been better overall, the piece of work could be sufficient within the context of the case. Conversely whilst there may be many areas of strength within the work the importance of a particular omission may be so significant that overall the piece of work is insufficient and there are development activities that the practitioner could complete in order improve practice.