

## Market event transcript - Designation of appropriate bodies for British school overseas

Event date: 11/07/23

Please read the below transcript alongside the BSO AB market engagement slides.

<b>Slide 1: Title slide</b>	No transcript.
<b>Slide 2 - Introductions</b>	<p>Hello, and welcome to the market engagement event for the designation of an appropriate body for British Schools Overseas.</p> <p>My name is Korin Wilshaw. I'm team leader for induction regulations and appropriate body policy. And I'll be presenting today with my colleague Abu Tahier who works with me on AB policy.</p> <p>We work within the Developing Teachers and Leaders Division in the Department for Education which along with statutory induction for teachers is also responsible for and the delivery of the Early Career Framework training programme, National Professional Qualifications, and Teaching School Hubs.</p>
<b>Slide 3 - Agenda</b>	<p>So, to start I just wanted to go over briefly what we will be covering in this presentation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- We'll be explaining the policy intent around the designation of an appropriate body (or 'AB') for British Schools Overseas - 'BSOs'.</li><li>- We will outline the role of the appropriate body, provide some outline information about the types of criteria we're planning to use to identify suitable organisations that can fulfil this role specifically for BSO schools, and</li><li>- we'll also share some provisional timings for when the application process will open and close.</li></ul> <p><b>I want to emphasise that all information provided at this event is provisional at this stage. It's intended as indicative information only and will be subject to confirmation in the final application pack when this is released.</b></p>

	<p>Before we start just to cover one or two brief points on housekeeping and how we'll run this session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We'll keep participants muted for the session as we present. As you can see on the slide, we are happy to gather questions that you post in the chat but will not be holding a Q&amp;A during this event.</li> <li>- We will provide responses in a Q&amp;A format via JAGGAER and a link to the slides shared at this event and a script of what we cover today will be also made available via the PIN.</li> <li>- We are aiming to have all these documents available by early next week and if you're signed up to JAGGAER you should receive a notification that the pin has been updated once they are uploaded.</li> </ul> <p>And as a reminder, JAGGAER is the department's e-tendering portal that you'll have used to express interest for the webinar event, and where we will host documents through the rest of the application process.</p>
<b>Slide 4 – Introduction and aims</b>	<p>So why are we looking at AB designation?</p> <p>We are committed to ensuring all new teachers, formerly referred to as 'NQTs', now 'Early Career Teachers' or 'ECTs' receive a well-supported induction. The role of the AB is critical to this. As many of you may already know, alongside wider reforms the AB sector, we have been looking at the option of designation to provide specialist AB services for BSOs and ensure these schools have ongoing access to high-quality AB services. Today, we are pleased to share some further provisional information on how this designation process will work.</p> <p><b>An ECF based induction</b></p> <p>To give some wider context, as many colleagues on the call will be aware, statutory teacher induction has seen significant reforms since 2021. The reforms have aimed to ensure new teachers are supported during a two-year induction with entitlements to time off timetable, mentoring and access to high quality training based on the Early Career Framework (ECF) to support their professional development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Statutory Induction is a two-year requirement which aims to ensure ECTs are able to benefit from the support offered during the start of their career. These two years entail regular progress reviews and assessment points to identify areas for ECTs to develop their teaching knowledge, skills, and practice.</li> <li>- The training ECTs receive as part of their induction should be based on this framework, which we refer to as 'ECF-based training'.</li> </ul>

	<p>ABs play a critical role in this stage of a teacher’s career as they are responsible for the quality assurance of statutory teacher induction and ensuring that ECTs are receiving their statutory entitlements. Our aim is to identify potential organisations who can demonstrate their experience and expertise in navigating the challenges of providing or supporting AB services for induction overseas whilst ensuring ECTs undertaking statutory induction in BSOs have access to an induction programme based on the ECF.</p> <p><b>Why do we need a specialist AB for BSOs?</b></p> <p>As you may be aware, the AB sector serving schools in England is in process of reform, with Teaching School Hubs becoming the main provider of AB services from September 2023, and all local authority ABs ceasing AB services fully from September 2024. With AB services offered by every teaching school hub area and every teaching school hub already allowed to offer AB services to BSOs by default in regulations, it is important to explain why alongside these reforms we are still committing to the designation of a specialist AB for BSOs.</p> <p>We have heard from numerous organisations representing BSOs that there is a need for specialist expertise and experience to meet the needs of BSOs and understand the contexts in which they provide induction for ECTs overseas. Such organisations have called for and welcomed proposals to designate specialist AB services for BSOs and ensure they have access to AB services that meet their specific needs. In particular they highlighted the importance of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Experience and expertise: Organisations with experience acting as the AB or working with an AB overseas can offer valuable insights and support to teachers serving statutory induction in BSOs. Understanding the unique challenges and dynamics of overseeing statutory induction overseas in BSOs allows the AB to provide tailored guidance and assistance.</li> <li>2. Geographical reach: We are keen that AB services are available to BSOs in diverse geographical locations. We will expect designated BSO ABs to have a wide geographical reach to offer support to BSOs and cater to their specific needs such as operating across a range of time zones, recognition of cultural sensitivities and understanding of local contexts.</li> </ol> <p><b>How will we designate?</b></p> <p>You might have questions about what ‘designation’ means in practice. As set out on the slide, where regulations provide that the Secretary of State has the power to ‘determine an organisation to act as an AB’, we describe this process as ‘designating an AB’ for the purposes of this presentation and will use this term in the application process to follow.</p>
<p><b>Slide 5 – Overview of Designation</b></p>	<p>So, on this slide we explain about more about how the process of designation will work in practice and the regulations that will apply to any designated BSO ABs.</p>

To identify organisations for designation, the department will run a competitive process. It will publish an application pack setting out criteria for organisations to apply for designation. While designation is not a 'contract' with any funding attached, the competitive process will be similar to a procurement exercise in that organisations will be invited to submit applications against specific questions, and these will then be scored against a published set of evaluation criteria with designation then awarded to the highest scoring bid or bids meeting an agreed threshold.

Any organisation that is successful in the designation process will receive a ministerial letter of designation to act as a BSO AB. This will set out the remit of offering AB services, limited to BSOs only. Successful organisations will also be required to sign a constitution which will outline how the SoS intends to designate, including governance and accountability arrangements, and conditions for withdrawal or termination.

Designated ABs will then be required to participate in departmental reviews on an annual basis to update on progress to ensure quality requirements are being met and that the AB is delivering services effectively. As with other ABs they will be permitted to charge schools a fee for their services (to cover but not exceed their costs).

In addition to any specific terms set out in this letter or designation and constitution, it is important to highlight that the same regulations and guidance that apply to all ABs operating in schools in England will also apply without exception to the designated BSO ABs. So, while there are specialist elements to the context of the BSO AB role, and a number of specific additional requirements may be set out as conditions of designation, the core AB functions will be those defined by regulations and statutory guidance for all ABs.

Links to all the regulations and published guidance that we're referring to will be provided at the end of this slide pack.

As you can see from this slide, one of the key distinctions for any designated BSO AB compared to other ABs will be that:

- The conditions of designation will limit the designated BSO ABs to operating only with BSOs and they will not also be able to serve as AB to schools based in England. As we mentioned earlier, this designation will not give designated ABs an exclusive licence to offer AB services to BSOs, because Teaching School Hub ABs can already work with BSOs. However, we know that in practice that the majority of hubs currently focus services on schools in England which is why a specialist designation is being offered.

### **Third party arrangements**

Before we move on to talk about the AB role in more detail, I first want to draw your attention to the role of third parties. Regulations prevent ABs from delegating their role and decision making. So,

	<p>any designated BSO ABs will be required to undertake all AB functions and make all decisions directly. This means that only a single organisation, rather than any consortium or partnership arrangement, can receive AB designation. There are strict rules around how ABs may work with third parties to support them in their AB role, and we would strongly encourage any organisations applying to read these carefully to ensure any proposed structures or arrangements set out in bids are fully compliant with the regulations and guidance on ABs working with third parties. The AB guidance, section 3.5, sets out further information.</p>
<b>Slide 6 – Overview of the AB role</b>	<p>On this next slide, we have set out a brief overview of the AB role.</p> <p>Please note that this is not an exhaustive list on the AB roles and responsibilities, and more information on the ABs can be found outlined in the 2012 induction regulations, the statutory induction guidance and appropriate body guidance.</p> <p>ABs oversee statutory teacher induction. The AB is responsible for verifying the head teacher or principal's assessment of the performance of their ECTs against the Teachers' Standards including whether they pass or fail at the end of induction. ABs also have a responsibility to ensure that ECTs have access to an induction programme based on the early career framework, or ECF. This process of checking is also known as 'ECF fidelity checking'.</p> <p>Additionally, ABs act as a contact point for ECTs to raise concerns and communicate with schools regarding their statutory duties. The AB checks the suitability of the ECT's post and that the school is providing statutory entitlements in line with statutory guidance. It works with schools on an ongoing basis to ensure these are in place.</p> <p>ABs also verify that ECTs have QTS, maintain ECT records, and submit data returns to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA).</p> <p>Another key role of ABs is also to provide information and support to Headteachers, building strong relationships and good communication with their schools, to respond to requests for guidance and assistance with induction programs, and offer advice.</p> <p>In summary, the appropriate body plays a vital role in overseeing ECT induction, ensuring support, and upholding standards.</p>
<b>Slide 7 – Which BSOs can offer induction</b>	<p>We also thought it might be helpful to give some more context around what we mean by 'BSO' when we're talking about statutory induction as there is a specific definition in regulations.</p> <p>The slide here sets out an extract of the section of regulations that determine where induction can be served. We haven't included the sections that refer to schools and institutions in England as</p>

	<p>they are out of scope of this designation but focus here on the schools that would be in scope of any designated BSO AB.</p> <p>The statutory guidance on induction, which accompanies the regulations, explains this as:</p> <p>“An independent school overseas which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- has been inspected by a DfE-accredited inspectorate within the last six years against the Standards for Inspection of British Schools Overseas; and</li> <li>- has satisfactorily met all of those standards/categories;”</li> </ul> <p>The regulations also state that to be suitable for induction, BSOs must also be a member of an organisation which the DfE has determined may represent such schools.</p> <p>(And just to acknowledge, we know several of these representative organisations here on the call today and we are grateful to you for the advice you’ve offered us on the specific needs of BSOs in accessing AB services).</p> <p>So, to confirm Early career teachers are able to serve their induction overseas provided that they are employed in a BSO, (as defined here), which chooses to offer statutory induction. And it is the role of the AB to ensure that BSOs they work with meet these criteria to be eligible to offer statutory induction before they register an ECT.</p> <p>So, it is important to recognise that understanding and checking the status of the school as well as the suitability of the ECT’s post and their qualifications is a key role of the designated BSO AB in being able to operate effectively overseas.</p>
<p><b>Slide 8 – Suitable organisations - criteria</b></p>	<p>In this final part of our presentation today, we wanted to share with you some outline information about the types of criteria we will be looking at to determine whether an organisation is suitable for the post. Obviously as before this is all caveated as provisional at this stage, and confirmed information will be available only when the competition launches, so we would advise you to wait until you have read the application pack once this becomes available before submitting questions on specific conditions for applying.</p> <p>But what we can say at this stage is that we will be placing a very high value on expertise and experience of providing or supporting AB services working with BSOs. Any organisations applying will need to highlight their experience as an AB or supporting an AB, whilst demonstrating if applicable how they have complied with regulations and guidance on working with or as third parties., I.e., going back to the point I was raising earlier about no delegation being permitted and making sure the AB remains fully responsible for all decisions made.</p>

Applying organisations will need to be able to demonstrate that they have or can put in place staffing, structures and systems to ensure adequate capacity and that those in the AB making decisions have the relevant professional expertise, experience, skills or training to support BSOs.

Applying organisations will also need to explain their geographical reach and be able to demonstrate how they can work effectively as an AB to BSOs across the world to manage the complexities and challenges of overseeing induction in overseas locations.

Applying organisations will also need to provide information on their governance structures and financial records as standard in competitive processes.

We will also ask organisations about potential conflicts. It is important that any other roles undertaken by an applying organisation should not interfere with its ability to undertake an impartial evaluation of the ECT's performance or its ability as an AB to hold headteachers or principals to account for their responsibilities towards ECTs during induction. So, in the event that an organisation has any other roles or functions that could create a conflict with offering AB services to BSOs, organisations will be required to clarify how these potential or actual conflicts would be mitigated and managed.

So, to summarise on who can apply, you will need to read the application pack when it's published, but we can say at this stage that:

1. We won't be limiting this to any particular type of organisation – it is down to organisations being able to demonstrate the required expertise and experience, including that of working as or with an AB supporting BSOs.
2. But organisations should be aware that because of restrictions around delegation only individual organisations as opposed to consortia can be designated.
3. And TSHs do not need to apply to be able to work with BSOs, as their existing status as ABs means they are already permitted to offer AB services to BSOs.

### **How many orgs will we designate**

Lastly, those of you who may have read the commitment in the 2022 AB consultation response closely may have noticed that it originally spoke about the designation of a single AB for BSOs. But we can confirm that the competition may result in the designation of one or more organisations as BSO ABs. This will depend on the strength of bids received and will be subject to applications meeting the criteria in full. Organisations will be recommended for designation in order of merit based on those whose applications score highest and meet a defined bar during the evaluation of bids. All applications will be assessed consistently against published criteria. Full scoring and award criteria will be confirmed in the application pack.

	<p>So, I'll now hand over to my colleague Abu who is going to talk about the timeline for next steps and how we will share further information after the session.</p>
<b>Slide 9 – Next steps</b>	<p>So, to finish we will just quickly run through the indicative timings for the next stages of the process, noting that these are provisional and still subject to agreement.</p> <p>Our aim is to launch the competitive process this summer, hopefully during the first part of August, so that it can be concluded in time for successful organisations to receive designation in early 2024 and be able to operate as ABs from the new academic year 2024-25.</p> <p>We recognise that holiday dates for organisations and school systems internationally will vary. To enable flexibility there will be a minimum 5-week window for applications with the closing date around mid-September.</p> <p>The outcome of the application process will be communicated later in the year to enable formal designation to take place in the new year in 2024.</p> <p>So, in terms of next steps for those organisations interested in reading the application pack, please ensure you have registered your interest via JAGGAER, and you will then be notified when the competition launches with details on how to access the application pack.</p>
<b>Slide 10 – Questions</b>	<p>So that brings us to the end of the information we have to share with you today. As we previously stated, if you have any questions, please feel free to put them now in the chat, or you can send questions to the email address set out in the slide.</p> <p>Answers to all questions submitted will then be provided from next week, (anonymised) via the PIN and JAGGAER to ensure all interested parties have equal access to information.</p> <p>And as we said earlier, we'll also aim to get these webinar slides and the script uploaded to the PIN by next week latest, so you will get a notification when that happens.</p>
<b>Slide 11 – End</b>	<p>So, I just wanted to take a moment to thank you for your time today. I hope that you find today's presentation, and the information that will follow over the next few weeks, helpful in informing you about the BSO AB role and that suitable organisations will consider applying once full details are available.</p> <p>That is the end of the presentation. We will leave the call open for a few minutes in case anyone still wants to post a question here.</p> <p>After that time, you can use the <a href="mailto:ab.bso@education.gov.uk">ab.bso@education.gov.uk</a> mailbox to send further questions.</p> <p>Thanks very much.</p>