

Attending:

Alison Wolf (Chair)
Frank Bowley (DfE)
Andrew Dickerson (Uni. of Sheffield)
Sandra McNally (CVER Director)
Charlynn Pullen (ETF)
Jenifer Ruiz-Valenzuela (CVER)

Apologies:

Stephen Machin (CEP, LSE)
Nigel Rogers (CEP and CVER Manager)
Stephen Nickell (University of Oxford)
Frank McLoughlin (ETF)
Bev Robinson (Blackpool and The Fylde College)
Richard Garrett (DfE)
Jo Cantlay (CVER Administrator)

Minutes from February steering group and action points

Minutes and responses agreed.

- **Action point:** Frank Bowley will contact Anne Milton's private secretary about potential participation at the CVER conference in September.
- CVER will be carrying additional work for the post-18 review. Stefan Speckesser (NIESR) needs data to be supplied very soon for this work.
- **Action point:** Frank Bowley will try to speed things up from the DfE side.

Presentation on Progress of the CVER Programme and Discussion

1. Sandra McNally gives a brief summary of written outputs since the last meeting (3 Discussion Papers, 2 briefing notes, 5 blog posts, and contributions to 2 consultations) and mentions that London Economics will continue to do work on returns to qualifications.
2. Sandra McNally will organise a meeting with Ofqual and awarding bodies for September, to explain the technical aspects of the 'Grade C paper' and potentially obtain more data for future CVER work. Sandra McNally asks whether it would be a good idea to hold a different event with an institution such as EPI that would focus more on the policy aspect of the Grade C paper and related issues. The Steering Group agreed that this is a good idea.
Action point: Sandra McNally to liaise with awarding bodies about a meeting about the Grade C project and explore the possibility of a more policy-oriented event.
3. Sandra McNally explains the outcomes that are to be expected from CVER in the near future. This includes a briefing note on 'Apprenticeships in England' that summarises published CVER research on this topic. There are a few other papers about apprenticeships in the pipeline. There is a discussion about how to communicate our work on apprenticeships to the media and other interested parties. Frank Bowley urges caution when talking about results related to apprenticeships because there have been

many recent reforms relating to the way apprenticeships are regulated and delivered. Outcomes from more recent apprenticeships might be different from those obtained for those undertaking them a few years ago.

4. Sandra McNally describes the work by McIntosh and Morris on apprenticeships in more detail. This compares returns to apprenticeships for different age groups.
 - a. Frank Bowley asks how much is due to age and how much is related to the type of apprenticeship. Sandra McNally explains that some of the differences are related to the sector of the apprenticeships.
 - b. Jenifer Ruiz-Valenzuela asks whether it would be worth to look at whether apprenticeships help the 25+ age group move out of unemployment. Frank Bowley thinks the effects would not be so big.
 - c. Sandra McNally suggests to look at the group aged 25-45.

Action point: Sandra McNally to give feedback to Steve McIntosh and Damon Morris based on discussion at the meeting as well as her review of the paper and another reviewer's comments.

5. Sandra McNally presents new research proposals. The first one is on evaluating the replacement of grant funding with loans for learners aged 24 and above (Hedges, Patrignani and Conlon). Frank Bowley mentions that DfE has already looked at this and he will share the work with the authors. Alison Wolf mentions that the authors also need to be aware of the increase in 4 year degrees (including year 0) for which they would need Higher Education data. In relation to this project, it would also be useful to consider the number and characteristics of colleges that are not using their allocation of Advanced Learner Loans (and note: loans are 'allocated' to colleges).

Frank Bowley offers to discuss the proposal with London Economics.

Action point: London Economics to liaise with Frank Bowley to understand what has been done already at DfE and not to start research until this discussion has taken place.

6. The next project proposal is by McNally and Valero on conducting a survey of management practices in FE Colleges. CVER will be discussing this with DfE, the ETF and AoC. Charlynn Pullen agrees that they should meet to discuss about the content and timing of the survey. Frank Bowley suggests discussing the project with the FE Commissioner and Roger Coates within DfE. Alison Wolf notes that how leaders respond to questions may be influenced by how they are evaluated by OfSTED.

Action point: Sandra McNally and Anna Valero to set up meetings about this project with relevant parties. Frank Bowley/Richard Garrett to ensure that they liaise with the right people at DfE.

7. Chiara Cavaglia has a new project proposal on the impact of working while studying and Gill Wyness would like to extend her work that looks into undermatch in FE. Both proposals receive the support of the steering group.

8. With regard to planned events, there will be a CVER-CEP roundtable about technological change and the demand for skills. CVER will also be participating in the International Conference on Employer Engagement in Education and Training. Additionally, the CVER annual conference is planned to take place on 6-7 September with 14 accepted papers. Steve McIntosh is organising a workshop/roundtable on apprenticeships. This will take place on 24 September at NIESR. Finally, CVER is working on planning an event about the 'C paper' with Ofqual and awarding bodies.

9. Sandra McNally invites ideas for potential future events and ideas were discussed on such topics as the post-18 review and skills and productivity.

Action point: Sandra McNally to consider potential topics for the next Steering Group meeting.

10. Future meetings discussed for late October/early November 2018, February 2019 and June 2019

Action point: Jo Cantlay to liaise with Sandra McNally, Frank Bowley and Alison Wolf in the first instance.

Summary of Action points

1. Frank Bowley will contact Anne Milton's private secretary about potential participation at the CVER conference in September.
2. CVER will be carrying additional work for the post-18 review. Stefan Speckesser (NIESR) needs data to be supplied very soon for this work. Frank Bowley will try to speed things up from the DfE side.
3. Sandra McNally to liaise with awarding bodies about a meeting about the Grade C project and explore the possibility of a more policy-oriented event.
4. McIntosh and Morris project about apprenticeships. Sandra McNally to give feedback to Steve McIntosh and Damon Morris based on discussion at the meeting as well as her review of the paper and another reviewer's comments.
5. Project proposal about Advanced Learner Loans. London Economics to liaise with Frank Bowley to understand what has been done already at DfE and not to start research until this discussion has taken place.
6. Management practices survey of FE colleges. Sandra McNally and Anna Valero to set up meetings about this project with relevant parties. Frank Bowley/Richard Garrett to ensure that they liaise with the right people at DfE.
7. Future events. Following discussion at the meeting, Sandra McNally to consider potential topics for the next Steering Group meeting.
8. Future meetings. Jo Cantlay to liaise with Sandra McNally, Frank Bowley and Alison Wolf in the first instance.