

Attending:

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

Apologies:

Stephen Machin (CEP, LSE)
Frank McLoughlin (ETF)
Stephen Nickell (University of Oxford)
Bev Robinson (Blackpool and The Fylde
College)
Nigel Rogers (CEP Manager)

Welcome and Introductions

Charlynn Pullen is welcomed to the meeting, and will be representing Frank McLoughlin on the Steering Group more regularly.

Minutes from February steering group and action points

No issues are raised.

Presentation on Progress of the CVER Programme and Discussion

[Presentation attached]

1. The presentation contains a summary of selected progress in each strand, together with more detail of one project per strand; and a discussion of the project proposal by London Economics to study the impact of the apprenticeship levy. (Slide 2)
2. Sandra McNally describes the state of the projects under the overarching strand, mentioning that two outputs have been published since the last Steering Group (briefing note on “Further Education in England: Learners and Institutions” and a discussion paper on “Post-16 Remedial Policies: A Literature Review”). There are two other outputs under review dealing with apprenticeship related questions (Burnsall, Nafilyan and Speckesser; and Nafilyan and Speckesser). (Slide 3)
Action point: Sandra will give Frank Bowley sight of the final versions of outputs before publication.
3. Sandra briefly summarises the projects under Strand 1 that have a focus on individuals: “Estimating returns using administrative data” (report 1.b); “Reconciling estimated returns to vocational qualifications using survey and administrative data” (report 1.1c); and “Understanding the counterfactual using administrative data”.
Action point: Sandra McNally and Andy Dickerson to review the project outputs under this strand and discuss in detail after the meeting.
4. Sandra gives an overview of what has been done in report 1.b (slides 5 to 11). The authors compare outcomes for those obtaining various vocational qualifications (as their highest level of qualification) to those obtaining a qualification at the next level down. Sandra McNally mentions that this study would benefit from including richer controls in their specifications to control for selection, and Andy Dickerson agrees.
Action point: LE to use continuous measures of tests in Maths and English (KS2) and GCSE (KS4) as control variables.
5. Alison Wolf asks a clarifying question about the number of people in the control group in each regression, and, at the lowest levels, what you are comparing to. When it comes to the regressions for the level 2 group or lower, Frank Bowley wonders whether the control group (those with qualifications at a lower level or no qualifications) might be a very select group. Alison Wolf also

expresses concern that the control group for lower-level vocational qualifications might be different from the treatment in ways that are even harder to measure than further up the distribution (e.g. due to special needs).

Action point: Authors to use caution when describing identification strategy and results, especially for lower-level qualifications, as selection issues might be more severe for the reason suggested above. The authors should state these kind of caveats in the paper.

6. Andy Dickerson notes that the paper about ‘settling the counterfactual debate’ will contribute to this debate. He explains that this involves a data driven approach to choosing the more appropriate counterfactual group.
7. It is noted that earnings differentials capture both wages and hours. The ‘social return’ to education includes both.
Action point: The interpretation of earnings differentials needs to reflect both employment and wages. This should be made clear in the Discussion Paper.
8. Moving onto the table on earnings differentials for men (at age 26, in slide 6), Sandra McNally points out that the estimates for those undertaking level 4 vocational qualifications and advanced Level 3 apprenticeships are high, suggesting that there is a big demand for these type of qualifications. She also mentions that the results are not very sensitive to using specifications with different sets of controls. BTECs at level 3 are not showing a big effect on earnings differentials. Alison Wolf mentions that this might be related with the fact that people doing BTECs at level 3 might continue to study higher vocational qualifications while those that stop at BTEC level 3 might be weaker students; and the same could apply for BTECs at level 2 (slide 8)
Action point: Investigate how many people that do BTECs at level 3 progress to higher levels and how many stop there? How many people that have achieved BTECs at Level 3 progress into Level 4/Undergrad degree/Advanced Level 3 apprenticeship? Are the low estimates for BTEC driven by this compositional issue?
9. Moving onto the same type of regressions for women (slide 7), Sandra McNally points out that the estimates for BTECs for women are higher, and reminds that the counterfactual for women is different than those for men (i.e., women in the control group have lower earnings than men in the control group of the “same level”). This should be taken into consideration when comparing earnings differentials between men and women since the estimates for women partly reflect the fact that the control group departs from a very low base.
10. Alison Wolf asks whether the data reveal anything about those on benefits. She notes that providers are paid by results so have an incentive to offer short courses to maximise completion rates.
11. Sandra McNally then talks briefly about the earnings differentials for people with very low vocational qualifications (below Level 2), but she mentions that with these regressions there is always the concern about the control group being too different from the treatment group (based on both observables and non-observables).
12. Sandra McNally describes now the main results of report 1.1c on “Reconciling estimated returns to vocational qualifications using survey and administrative data”. The table in slide 13 shows the results when using admin data versus LFS. It shows that when you start applying restrictions to make the samples more comparable, the initial dissimilar results converge to results that have similar policy implications. Sandra McNally points out that with Level 2 qualifications, the results are driven by employment differences rather than by wage differences between qualifications.
13. There was some discussion on the interpretation of employment differentials for those with low level qualifications. Does this mean that low-level qualifications increased human capital? Not necessarily. Andy Dickerson suggests that a potential explanation behind the results is signalling – individuals with low-level qualifications are signalling that they showed up at school to earn their qualifications, and this in turn signals their ability to turn up in the morning to the job. Alison Wolf agrees with this potential explanation. Andy Dickerson also points out that the increase in the coefficient when moving from row 4 to 3 might be related with the differences on the proportion of people being on minimum wage jobs across the different age groups. Sandra McNally says that it

is difficult to understand why moving from row 6 to 5 should make such a difference in the estimates and Jenifer Ruiz-Valenzuela suggests that a potential explanation could be given not including interactions terms for the other controls in the regression (controls*qualifications)

Action point: Change the layout of the table so that it is read from top to bottom. Explore the issues discussed above (especially why moving from row 6 to 5 makes so much difference).

14. Sandra McNally presents another table similar to the one before, but using BTEC Level 3 qualifications as an example instead (slide 14). She mentions that moving from weekly earnings to hourly earnings does not matter as much (especially for men). This gender difference might be explained by the type of BTECs that men and women do, says Andy Dickerson.
15. Sandra McNally talks now about strand 2 (Quality of provision, slide 15). She explains that the UTC project has been presented twice at DfE and that the data is due to be released very soon. In terms of the effectiveness of CEOs in FE colleges, Sandra McNally explains that there has been progress on the vast amount of data work required for this project and that preliminary results will be shown at the next SG (together with a briefing note in the Autumn). Sandra McNally explains that for the next tranche of funding, we are aiming at doing a management survey after we have been informed by the current work on what is best to ask in the survey. Frank Bowley says that there is a lot of interest at DfE now on leadership. Jenifer Ruiz-Valenzuela says that Terrier, Van-Effenterre and she have been in contact with several people including Helen Wood at DfE and Professor David Greatbatch who is writing an evidence review on leadership in FE. This project has been described to them and we have shared our knowledge on the data limitations existing so far to address the type of questions needed. Charlyne Pullen explains that the ETF is going to carry out a survey of training needs in Autumn 2017; and Frank Bowley mentions that DfE is planning to do a survey of the workforce that picks out some areas of leadership. Sandra McNally suggests that CVER input to this process.
16. Regarding other projects in this strand, Sandra McNally mentions that the Apprenticeship case study has now been published as a briefing note; and that the work on capital expenditures is being pursued (mainly by Claudia Hupkau, with Henry Overman). She also mentions that we are very close to receiving the new AQA data for the Grade C paper, and that this paper has been presented in many conferences/workshops; and we should have a discussion paper soon (slide 15).
17. Progress has been made on the value added project, and Sandra McNally presents some early findings on the heterogeneous returns of attending different types of FE institutions (slide 15). Frank Bowley mentions that Peter Urwin (and others at Westminster) are soon going to publish a relevant discussion paper on the topic.
18. Sandra McNally also presents some results on how certain variables (like principal and teacher salaries, or OFSTED grades) impact FE institutions' value added (slide 17). A discussion paper will be ready on this ahead of the next SG.
19. Under Strand 3, Sandra McNally mentions that CVER DP 001 has now been published in the NIESR Review, and that another discussion paper on low-level vocational qualifications has been published as a CVER DP. A paper on "peer effects and social influence in post-16 educational choice" is now under review for the DP series; and Andy Dickerson explains that he together with Stefan Speckesser (and another researcher) will work on an improved methodology for the same question. Finally, Sandra McNally mentions that the paper on whether "Is there an earnings premium associated with apprenticeships for young people?" has been presented now several times and will be drafted soon.
20. Sandra McNally then presents two slides on the project by Andy Dickerson and Damon Morris on the change in the utilisation in skills over time; showing big increases in the utilisation of mainly analytical/problem solving (data) and people skills, and decreasing utilisation of manual (things) skills. She then presents a graph on the returns to those skills (see slides 19 and 20). Sandra McNally wonders whether there are non-linearities in the return to skills.

Action point: Check whether there are non-linearities in the returns to skills (for instance by education levels).

21. Sandra McNally then presents the project proposal by London Economics on the evaluation of the apprenticeship levy, where London Economics wants to identify both the volume and the composition of apprenticeship training undertaken by levied firms before and after the introduction of the levy. Alison Wolf thinks that the data existing right now would not be enough to see any effects on the levy yet, and that it is probably too soon to look at this question. Firm-level data is required, as well as follow-up data. Frank Bowley thinks that the overall idea is good, but too soon. More data is needed. Sandra McNally and Andy Dickerson suggest that CVER considers an evaluation of the apprenticeship levy as part of the application for a funding extension.

Action point: Check other sources of data, like firm-level data. Revisit the project in the future, along with other projects looking at the levy in the funding extension bid.

Communication, dissemination and CVER events

22. Sandra McNally summarises the slide on communication (slide 22) by showing outreach of the newsletter, the website, some examples of our engagement activities, and seminars/upcoming CVER conference.
Action point: Frank Bowley to discuss ideas for the policy panel with Sandra McNally. Alison Wolf to check availability to give opening speech at the CVER conference in September.
23. Frank Bowley noted that CVER projects had moved from the stage of data collection and cleaning to analysis and dissemination, and providing insight to policy-makers on key issues. He suggests that communication could now be more targeted.

Action point: Sandra to draft a letter the new minister for Skills (Anne Milton), explaining what CVER does etc. and inviting her to the conference.

Any other business

24. Interim review:
Sandra McNally expresses concern about future funding for CVER: we need to know by December at the latest. She reminds the SG of the process for the interim review and the application for a funding extension.

Action point: Frank Bowley to find an independent evaluator.

25. The next meetings of the Steering Group are to be arranged.
Action point: Harriet Ogborn to trawl for dates among SG members.

Summary of Action points

1. Sandra will give Frank Bowley sight of the final versions of outputs relating to apprenticeships (paragraph 2) before publication.
2. Sandra McNally and Andy Dickerson to review the project outputs under Strand 1 (relating to the estimation of earnings differentials, comparing counter-factuals etc.) and discuss in detail after the meeting.
3. In project 1.1b about estimating earnings differentials, London Economics to include continuous measures of tests in Maths and English (KS2) and GCSE (KS4) as control variables.
4. Project 1.1b about estimating earnings differentials using LEO: Authors to use caution when describing identification strategy and results, especially for lower-level qualifications, as selection issues might be more severe for the reason suggested above. The authors should state these kind of caveats in the paper.
5. Project 1.1b: The interpretation of earnings differentials needs to reflect both employment and wages. This should be made clear in the Discussion Paper.

6. Project 1.1b: Investigate how many people that do BTECs at level 3 progress to higher levels and how many stop there? How many people that have achieved BTECs at Level 3 progress into Level 4/Undergrad degree/Advanced Level 3 apprenticeship? Are the low estimates for BTEC driven by this compositional issue?
7. Project 1.1c. (Reconciling estimated returns to vocational qualifications using survey and administrative data.) Change the layout of the table so that it is read from top to bottom. Explore the issues discussed in paragraphs 12 and 13 (especially why moving from row 6 to 5 makes so much difference).
8. Project 3.1.(Changes in skill utilisation and returns). Check whether there are non-linearities in the returns to skills (for instance by education levels).
9. In the context of a potential evaluation of the apprenticeship levy, check other sources of data, like firm-level data. CVER to re-visit the project in the future, along with other projects looking at the levy in the funding extension bid.
10. CVER conference: Frank Bowley to discuss ideas for the policy panel with Sandra McNally. Alison Wolf to check availability to give opening speech at the CVER conference in September.
11. Sandra to draft a letter the new minister for Skills (Anne Milton), explaining what CVER does etc. and inviting her to the conference.
12. Frank Bowley to find an independent evaluator for the CVER interim review and application to extend funding.
13. Harriet Ogborn to trawl for dates among SG members for future meetings.

Centre for Vocational Education Research: Steering Group Meeting, 21 June 2017

Sandra McNally

Outline

1. Brief summary of (selected) progress by Strand – with a focus on one main project per Strand
2. Project proposal (London Economics)
3. Communication and Dissemination

Overarching Strand:

Descriptive overview of VE sector and policy issues

- A briefing note on “Further Education in England: Learners and Institutions” (Hupkau and Ventura)
- A discussion paper on “Post-16 Remedial Policies: A Literature Review” (Van Effenterre).
- An analysis of the duration and achievement of apprenticeships in England (Bursnall, Nafilyan and Speckesser). Under review
- The Longer the Better? The impact of the 2012 apprenticeship reform in England on achievement and other outcomes (Nafilyan and Speckesser). Under review



Strand 1: Impact of VE on individuals, firms and growth (Focus here on individuals)

- Estimating returns using administrative data
(Conlon, Patrignani and Hedges). Report 1.b
- Reconciling estimated returns to vocational
qualifications using survey and administrative data
(Conlon, Hedges, Patrignani, McIntosh, Morris).
Report 1.1c
- Understanding the counterfactual using
administrative data
(Conlon, Patrignani and Hedges)

Estimating returns using administrative data (Report 1.1b)

- Compare outcomes for those obtaining various vocational qualifications (as their highest level of qualification) to those who obtain a qualification at the next level down.
- They show estimates after controlling for many characteristics of individuals which might both effect the qualification achieved and labour market outcomes
- Earnings differentials are often quite high – strikingly so for Level 4 vocational qualifications and Apprenticeships (especially if “advanced”).
- Estimates for some level 3 and level 2 qualifications are relatively modest and sometimes disappear altogether when more detailed controls are included.
- Case for including more detailed controls?

Earnings differentials for men (aged 26)

	Counterfactual 1			Counterfactual 2		
	Baseline	Augmented	Augmented plus	Baseline	Augmented	Augmented plus
Highest qualification						
Level 4 vocational	0.348***	0.314***	0.309***	0.371***	0.324***	0.313***
<i>Level 3</i>						
Advanced Apprenticeship	0.403***	0.338***	0.329***	0.261***	0.226***	0.215***
NVQ level 3	0.209***	0.173***	0.155***	0.224***	0.179***	0.150***
BTEC level 3	0.073***	0.021***	0.002	0.092***	0.029***	-0.002
Other full L3 vocational	0.120***	0.067***	0.061***	0.145***	0.081***	0.054***
2+ A levels or equivalent	0.192***	0.106***	0.063***	0.084***	0.074***	0.074***
Level 3 other vocational	0.098***	0.072***	0.064***	0.129***	0.087***	0.062***
1 A level or equivalent	0.109***	0.053***	0.025***	0.005	0.013	0.010

Earnings differentials for women (aged 26)

	Counterfactual 1			Counterfactual 2		
	Baseline	Augmented	Augmented plus	Baseline	Augmented	Augmented plus
Highest qualification						
Level 4 vocational	0.288***	0.229***	0.232***	0.361***	0.286***	0.256***
<i>Level 3</i>						
Advanced Apprenticeship	0.256***	0.187***	0.165***	0.201***	0.151***	0.121***
NVQ level 3	0.140***	0.106***	0.089***	0.185***	0.131***	0.093***
BTEC level 3	0.216***	0.158***	0.128***	0.261***	0.190***	0.145***
Other full L3 vocational	0.150***	0.105***	0.070***	0.200***	0.138***	0.088***
2+ A levels or equivalent	0.397***	0.273***	0.208***	0.206***	0.184***	0.181***
Level 3 other vocational	0.147***	0.111***	0.100***	0.213***	0.150***	0.103***
1 A level or equivalent	0.233***	0.155***	0.117***	0.066***	0.004	0.012

Earnings differentials for men (aged 26)

Highest qualification Level 2	Counterfactual 1			Counterfactual 2		
	Baseline	Augmented	Augmented plus	Baseline	Augmented	Augmented plus
Intermediate Apprenticeship	0.242***	0.202***	0.197***	0.312***	0.245***	0.236***
NVQ level 2	0.157***	0.147***	0.142***	0.223***	0.183***	0.176***
GNVQ level 2	0.057***	0.034***	0.034***	0.115***	0.058***	0.047***
BTEC level 2	0.002	-0.006	-0.011	0.068***	0.027***	0.017
Other full L2 vocational	0.109***	0.090***	0.082***	0.177***	0.125***	0.113***
5 GCSEs A*-C	0.208***	0.134***	0.133***	0.174***	0.124***	0.126***
L2 other vocational	-0.001	-0.003	0.008	0.067***	0.032***	0.027***

Earnings differentials for women (aged 26)

Highest qualification	Counterfactual 1			Counterfactual 2		
	Baseline	Augmented	Augmented plus	Baseline	Augmented	Augmented plus
Level 2						
Intermediate Apprenticeship	0.165***	0.112***	0.100***	0.248***	0.173***	0.147***
NVQ level 2	0.100***	0.085***	0.073***	0.184***	0.142***	0.118***
GNVQ level 2	0.139***	0.123***	0.118***	0.214***	0.170***	0.145***
BTEC level 2	0.088***	0.093***	0.102***	0.186***	0.162***	0.151***
Other full Level 2 vocational	0.062***	0.065***	0.056***	0.144***	0.117***	0.100***
5 GCSEs A*-C	0.360***	0.220***	0.218***	0.329***	0.204***	0.207***
Level 2 other vocational	0.040***	0.036***	0.049***	0.122***	0.088***	0.068***

Earnings differentials for men (aged 26)

Highest qualification	Counterfactual 1			Counterfactual 2		
	Baseline	Augmented	Augmented plus	Baseline	Augmented	Augmented plus
Below Level 2						
NVQ level 1	0.120***	0.087***	0.040	0.184***	0.117***	0.089**
GNVQ level 1	0.091***	0.051***	0.009	0.142***	0.073***	0.055
BTEC level 1	-0.009	-0.006	-0.011	0.047	0.034	0.090
Other level 1 vocational	0.126***	0.070***	-0.010	0.183***	0.085***	0.017
5 GCSEs A*-G	0.218***	0.128***	0.124***	0.187***	0.114***	0.111***
Entry/Other Level	-0.107***	-0.058***	-0.043***			

Earnings differentials for women (aged 26)

	Counterfactual 1			Counterfactual 2		
	Baseline	Augmented	Augmented plus	Baseline	Augmented	Augmented plus
Highest qualification Below Level 2						
NVQ level 1	0.093***	0.093***	0.023	0.104***	0.092***	-0.006
GNVQ level 1	0.172***	0.185***	0.053	0.187***	0.186***	-0.032
BTEC level 1	0.053	0.081*	-0.017	0.065	0.082*	-0.017
Other level 1 vocational	0.161***	0.121***	0.006	0.177***	0.108***	-0.003
5 GCSEs A*-G	0.276***	0.205***	0.203***	0.265***	0.203***	0.205***
Entry/Other Level	-0.039*	-0.008	-0.010			

Reconciling estimated returns to vocational qualifications using survey and administrative data

- Attempts to reconcile estimated 'returns' using administrative data (LEO) and survey data (the LFS).
- The examples given in this report (for NVQ level 2 qualifications and BTEC level 3 qualifications) shows that estimates become much closer as the methodology and controls are included to become more homogeneous.

Estimated Wage Differentials to NVQ Level 2 Qualifications

Row number	Specification	Male	Female
1	ILR – LFS specification	0.240 (0.007)**	0.197 (0.010)**
2	LFS – weekly earnings	0.199 (0.086)**	0.221 (0.074)**
3	LFS – restrict age groups considered	0.091 (0.043)**	0.100 (0.042)**
4	LFS – restrict control variables to those in ILR	0.074 (0.016)**	0.034 (0.011)**
5	LFS – separate equations for each qualification	0.068 (0.015)**	0.060 (0.011)**
6	LFS – typical specification include all qualifications, all control variables, all ages, hourly earnings.	0.009 (0.012)	-0.057 (0.007)**

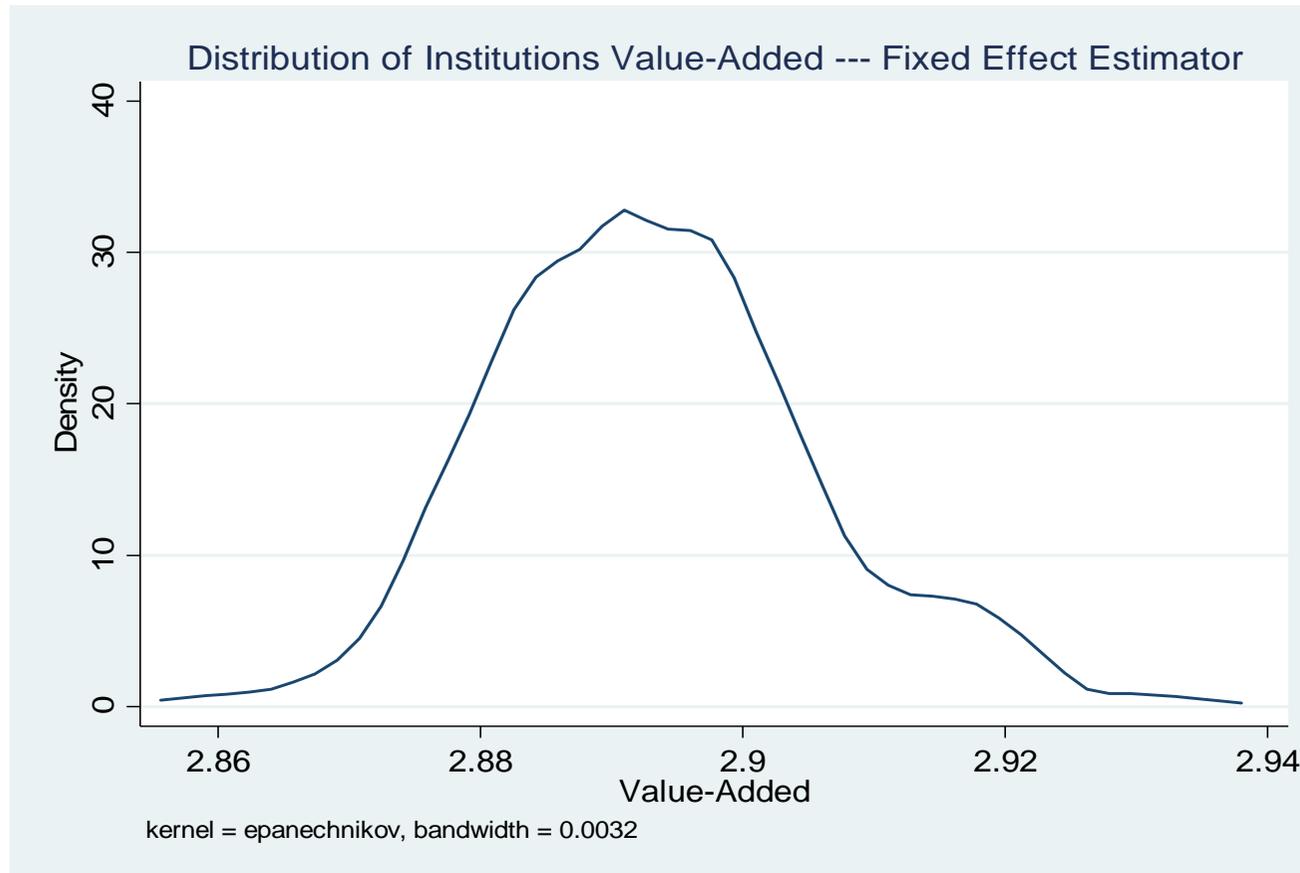
Estimated Wage Differentials to BTEC Level 3 Qualifications

Row number	Specification	Male	Female
1	ILR – LFS specification	0.066 (0.005)**	0.251 (0.007)**
2	LFS – weekly earnings	0.087 (0.027)**	0.159 (0.032)**
3	LFS – restrict age groups considered	0.073 (0.019)**	0.107 (0.018)**
4	LFS – restrict control variables to those in ILR	0.111 (0.010)**	0.113 (0.009)**
5	LFS – separate equations for each qualification	0.176 (0.009)**	0.136 (0.008)**
6	LFS – typical specification include all qualifications, all control variables, all ages, hourly earnings.	0.277 (0.009)**	0.230 (0.009)**

Strand 2: Quality of VE provision

- **Impact of UTCs on pupil attainment** (Machin, McNally, Terrier, Ventura). Presented to policy leads at DfE on 2 occasions. Data has been approved for next steps.
- **Effectiveness of CEOs in the Public Sector: evidence from Further Education Colleges** (Ruiz-Valenzuela, Terrier, Van Effenterre). Briefing note due for the Autumn.
- **The value added of further education providers in England** (Aucejo, Hupkau and Ruiz-Valenzuela) Discussion paper will be ready by the next meeting. To be presented at CVER Conference
- **The impact of capital expenditure on college performance** (Gibbons, Hupkau, McNally, Overman) Now being pursued as joint project with WWG.
- **“The Decision to Undertake an Apprenticeship A Case Study”** (McIntosh). Briefing note published in March
- **Importance of Grade C in GCSE exams for progression** (Machin, McNally, Ruiz-Valenzuela). Paper presented at several conferences. DfE is currently matching data from AQA. Discussion paper should be written up soon.

Illustration of one measure of the distribution of 'value added' (measured as earnings per day)



Correlates of value added

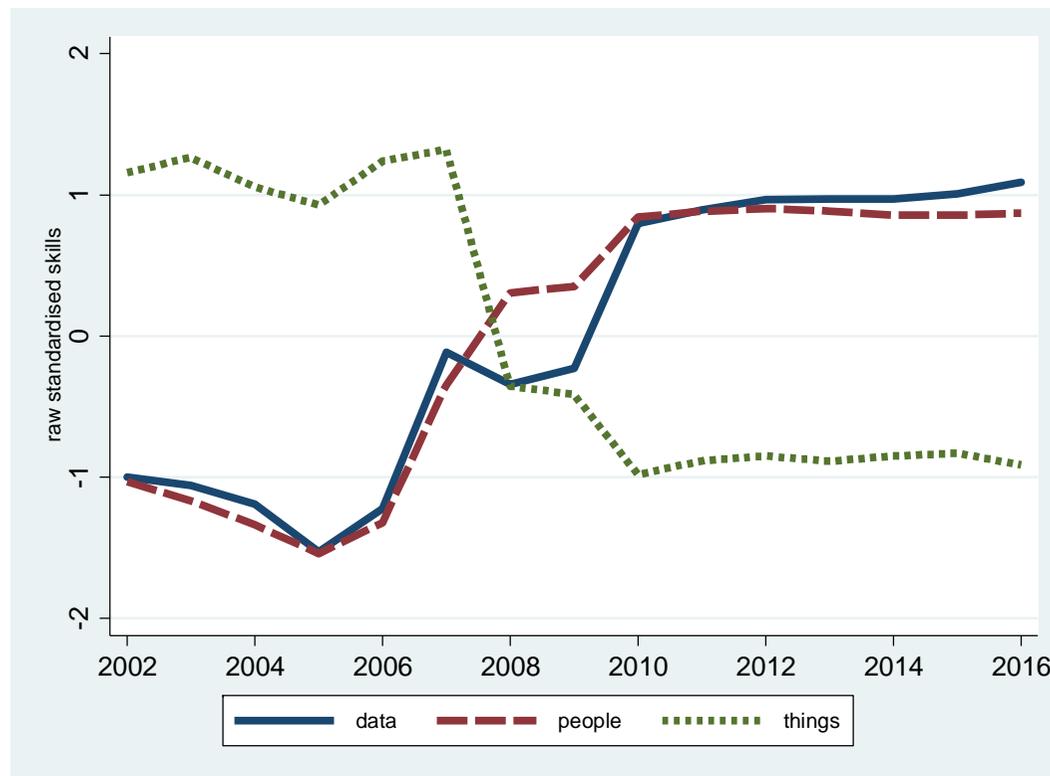
OLS Regression: Dep. Var. Institution VA					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Teacher Salary/ Total Inst. Income	0.022** (0.010)				
Principal Salary/ Total Inst. Income		0.591*** (0.209)			
Student-Teacher Ratio			-0.0001* (0.00006)		
Expenditure/ Number of Stud				0.0025*** (0.0006)	
Ofsted – Outstanding					0.003 (0.004)
Ofsted - Good					0.003 (0.004)
Ofsted – Improvement					0.004 (0.004)
R-squared	0.015	0.024	0.016	0.057	0.004
Observations	275	275	276	275	217

Strand 3: Individual participation decisions and the costs and benefits of VE (Selected projects)

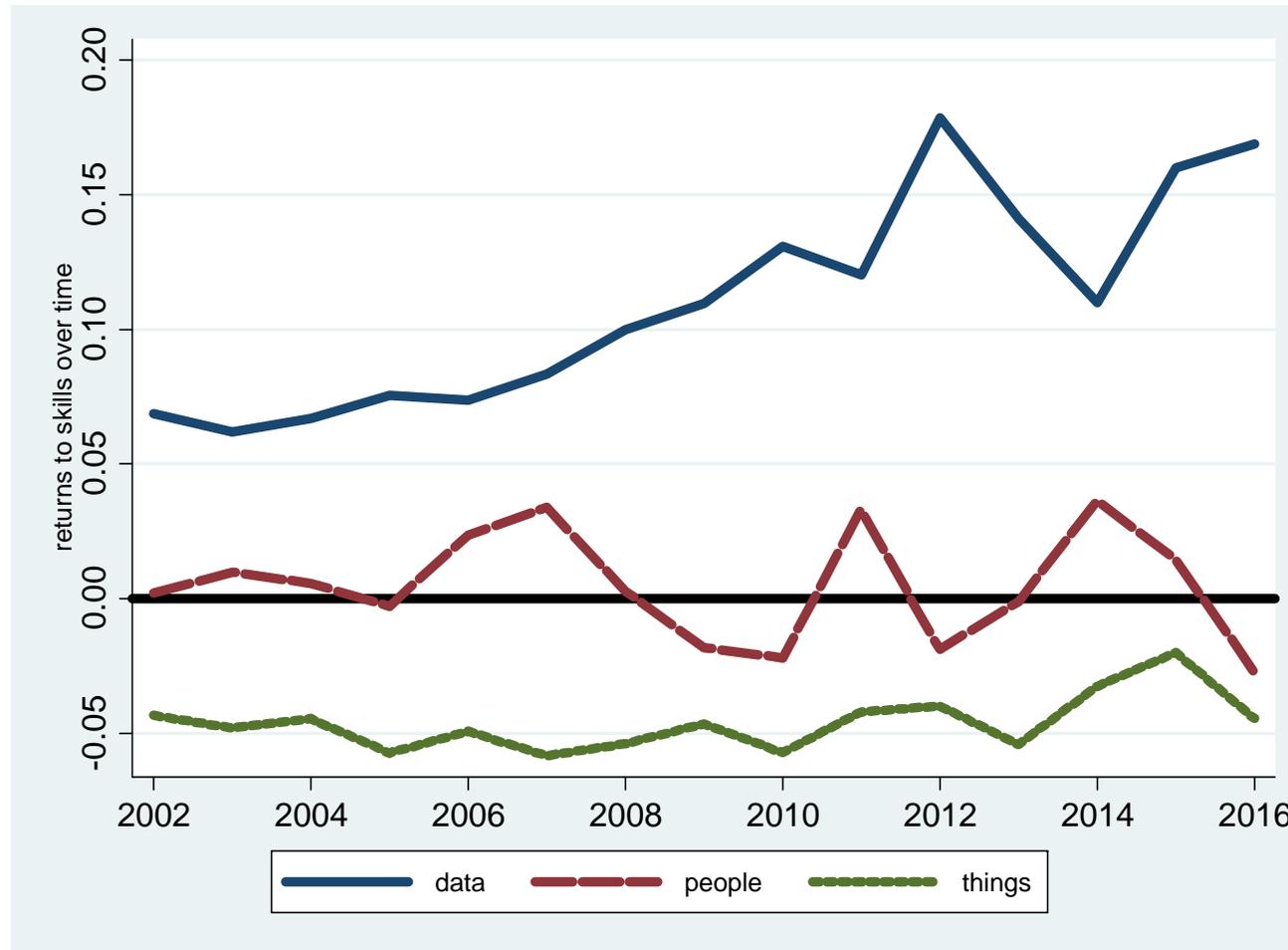
- Post-Compulsory Education in England: Choices and Implications (Hupkau, McNally, Ruiz Valenzuela and Ventura) *NIESR Review*. May 2017
- A discussion paper “Young people in low level vocational education: characteristics, trajectories and labour market outcomes” (Hedges, Nafilyan, Speckesser and de Coulon).
- Peer Effects and Social Influence in Post-16 Educational Choice (Hedges and Speckesser). Under Review
- Is there an earnings premium associated with apprenticeships for young people? (Cavaglia, McNally, Ventura). Draft will be written up soon

The changing pattern of skills demand in the UK (Dickerson and Morris, Project 3.1)

Figure shows trend in the utilisation of skills in the UK



Returns to skills over time



Project proposal: An evaluation of the apprenticeship Levy (London Economics)

- To identify both the volume and composition of apprenticeship training undertaken by levied firms before and after the introduction of the Levy.
- Assess the extent to which the demographic profile of trainees might have changed
- Identify a counterfactual group of businesses that are unaffected by the Levy – for instance those firms that have a payroll bill ranging between £2.5 million and £2.99 million
- Propose to commence analysis in June 2017 (matching the most recent versions of the ILR-EDS-IDBR and ABS). This first stage of the analysis will establish the **historic baseline** covering 4-5 years prior to the introduction of the Levy
- As versions of the ILR are available every 3 months, continuously update the matched data so that there is a live picture of the differential incidence of publicly funded training between levied-firms and firms in the control group.
- The first analysis of the differential productivity impact of first 12 months of the Levy could be undertaken in September 2018.

Communication, dissemination and CVER events

- **Newsletter** (now goes to 750 people). 15,000 visitors to the website (up 3,665 since the last SG).
- **Long list of engagement activities**. This now includes seminars at DfE (McNally, McIntosh and Ruiz-Valenzuela have all given seminars). Lots of conference/seminar presentations, stakeholder engagement, writing blogs
- **Engagement with policy makers and politicians** through submission of response to consultations (e.g. the Green Paper; invitation to participate in the Skills Commission for the Apprenticeship Inquiry), other panel discussions (e.g. with the Resolution Foundation; Centre for Progressive Capitalism)
- We will have held **6 seminars this term** (Jan-June 2017) and are already planning the next set of seminars (2017-18), as well as the **Annual Conference on 11-12 September 2017**.

Process for interim review and application for extension

1. Interim report for October SG meeting
2. Submit the report to the Research Board at DfE
3. SG writes report for the Research Board (shortly after SG meeting in October)
4. An independent evaluator writes a short report
5. The Research Board makes a decision about the funding extension and if so, this goes to the Minister.