

Appendix G: Terms of Reference for the Review and Steering Group

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for the study as defined in the Project Initiation Document and agreed by the Steering Group were as follows:

1 Project Definition and Scope

To review the governance arrangements in the Further Education sector in England including FE Colleges, Adult Community Learning Providers and Work-based learning providers. Such a review is widely anticipated within the FE sector in England.

2 Background to the Project

LSIS and The AoC are to commission a major sector- led review into governance to include a representation from across the sector. The broadest representation should be invited to be on a steering group to ensure that the diversity of governance arrangements are represented.

3 Project Aim

The key aims of the project are to review the practices and purpose of FE sector governance in England, with a view to making evidence based recommendations to the sector and to DIUS. It will build on effective practice in Governance and ensure that the framework across the FE sector is fit for purpose.

Working together in partnership



4. Objectives

To review: how fit for purpose the current framework for FE governance is, and identify current effective governance practice. To include:

- The composition of governing bodies across the FE college sector.
- The governance arrangements in charities and other types of ACL and WBL providers.
- Remuneration of governing body members, including the Chair.
- The recruitment, retention and length of appointment of governors and chairs in the FE sector.
- The roles and responsibilities of, and relationships between, the chair, governors and the principal/chief accounting officer, and the ways in which they ensure accountability and regulation

5 Approach and Methodology

The research underpinning the study will adopt a triangular methodology that involves taking evidence from a broad range of stakeholders and representatives across the range of providers within the sector. There will be interviews with key organisations (and any other relevant bodies) and desk research including comparative literature in the field. There will be a strong focus on the practical issues that underpin governance and a range of recommendations will result, including:

- Establish understanding of current governance frameworks applying to FE colleges.
- Review of governance models and practice applying to training providers.
- Carry out a review of existing governance research/ studies – to include non-education sectors.
- Review the role and composition of FE college governing bodies
- Interviews with practitioners.
- Interviews with non-FE governance practitioners/experts.

The review team should work with all areas of the FE system to develop consensus on the governance requirements for the future, building on the Framework for Excellence.

Influences:

- Machinery of government changes
- Funding methodologies
- Increased self- regulation
- Charitable status
- The importance of transparency in the proper use of public funds
- The drive to raise quality and standards of performance.

6 Partnerships

The review will adopt a participative stakeholder model that involves key communities of policy and practice that will inform the evidence base of the review. Participation will be voluntary and will respect the confidentiality of data and sources.

7 Project Plan

The project plan comprises up to 100 days of research combining literature and documentary sources; individual and group interviews; meetings and visits; data analysis and report writing. (Project plan appendix 1)

8 Project Management

The review will be managed by Jo Matthews and will be overseen by a joint working group including representatives from LSIS, AoC and DIUS. It will be conducted by a project team, which will include experienced researchers in the field of governance across the sector. The project will be co-ordinated by LSIS in partnership with the AoC.

9 Consultation and Communications

The review is an independent process that is contingent on the participation and involvement of key stakeholders including principals, chairs of governors, trustees, directors and members of representative organisations across the sector, whose experience and perspectives will be represented in the study and its conclusions. The steering group will be convened to enable the project team to present questions and data findings and to identify other areas of investigation.

10 Quality Assurance

The project will be monitored by the project manager who will provide regular progress reports to the steering group and the working group. They will ensure that the terms of reference are covered through the research activity.

The steering group will meet three times over the period of the research to work in partnership to support the review, to oversee the process and outcomes of the review and to ensure the objectives are met.

11 Outcome/Impact

An assessment of the effectiveness of the existing governance arrangements and recommendations to improve the impact, accountability and effectiveness of governance across the FE system. This may include:

- Recommendations for improving the quality of governance overall in the FE sector.
- Recommendations to improve the status of governors, and public understanding of their role and contribution.
- A review of the case for, and options for, recognising/rewarding governor contributions, especially chairs of governors.
- Specification for the role of a college governor.
- Specification for the role of Chair of governors.
- Recommendations for succession planning.
- Identified skills gaps/development needs for college governors, to include 'capacity building' for governing bodies in advance of the transition to the new funding arrangements, potential development of self-organised networks.

- Proposals to improve ‘accountability’ to communities and demonstration of public benefit.
- Effective practice case studies.
- Recommendations for establishing and organising, on a self-sustaining basis, effective networks of governors for exchange of information, good practice, innovation and mutual support.

Steering Group

Members of the Steering Group for the review were:

- Liz Ball, 157 Group
- Alison Boulton, Chief Executive, the Association of National Specialist Colleges (NATSPEC)
- Vic Croxson, Chief Executive, Land Based Colleges Aspiring to Excellence (LANDEX)
- Martin Doel, Chief Executive, the Association of Colleges (AoC)
- Jan Edrich, Chief Executive of the Association of South East Colleges (AOSEC)
- Paul Eeles, Association of Learning Providers (ALP)
- John Fowl, AoC National Clerks’ Network (NCN)
- Brian Godbold, Governance Development Manager, AoC
- Julian Gravatt, Assistant Chief Executive & Director of Research and Development, AoC
- Sheila Kearney, Research Manager, the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS)
- Susie Knight, Head of Executive and Governance Development, LSIS
- Sue Lovell, Programme Director – Leaderships Skills for Governance, LSIS
- Caroline Mager, Executive Director - Policy and Strategic Intelligence, LSIS
- Jo Matthews, Project Manager
- Helen Pettifor, Executive Director - Provider Development (Leadership), LSIS
- Bob Powell, Chief Officer, the National Network of Local Adult Learning Providers (HOLEX)
- Mark Ravenhall, the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE)
- Alan Schofield, Researcher
- Simon Shaw, Researcher
- Dan Taubman, Senior National Education Official, the University and College Union (UCU)
- John Wilkinson, AoC Governors’ Council
- Sue Whitham MBE, Head of Secretariat, Sixth Form Colleges’ Forum (SFCF)
- Vickie Wood, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS)
- Ian Yarroll, NIACE