

NCOP Evaluation

Office for
Students



Beth Isaac

Senior Evaluation Officer

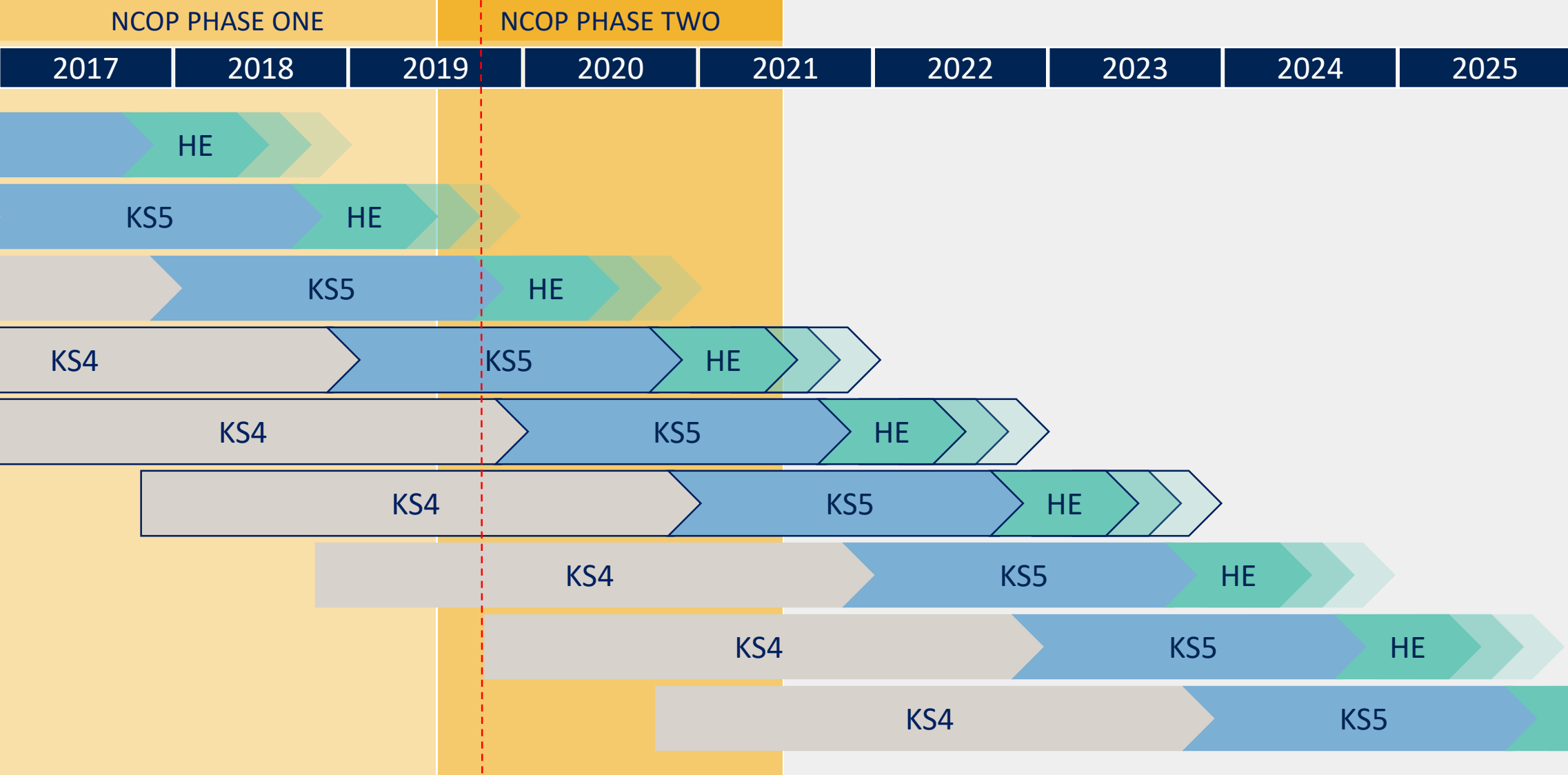
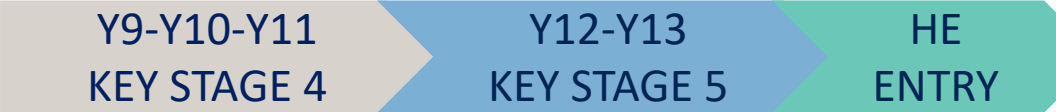
Directorate Fair Access and Participation

NCOP evaluation objectives

- Demonstrate and understand impact of taxpayer's investment
- Support NCOP to have the most impact during and beyond
- Support future evidence led policy decisions
- Contribute to a stronger evidence base around 'what works' (when, how and for whom) in HE outreach
- Strengthen evaluation practice in the wider sector

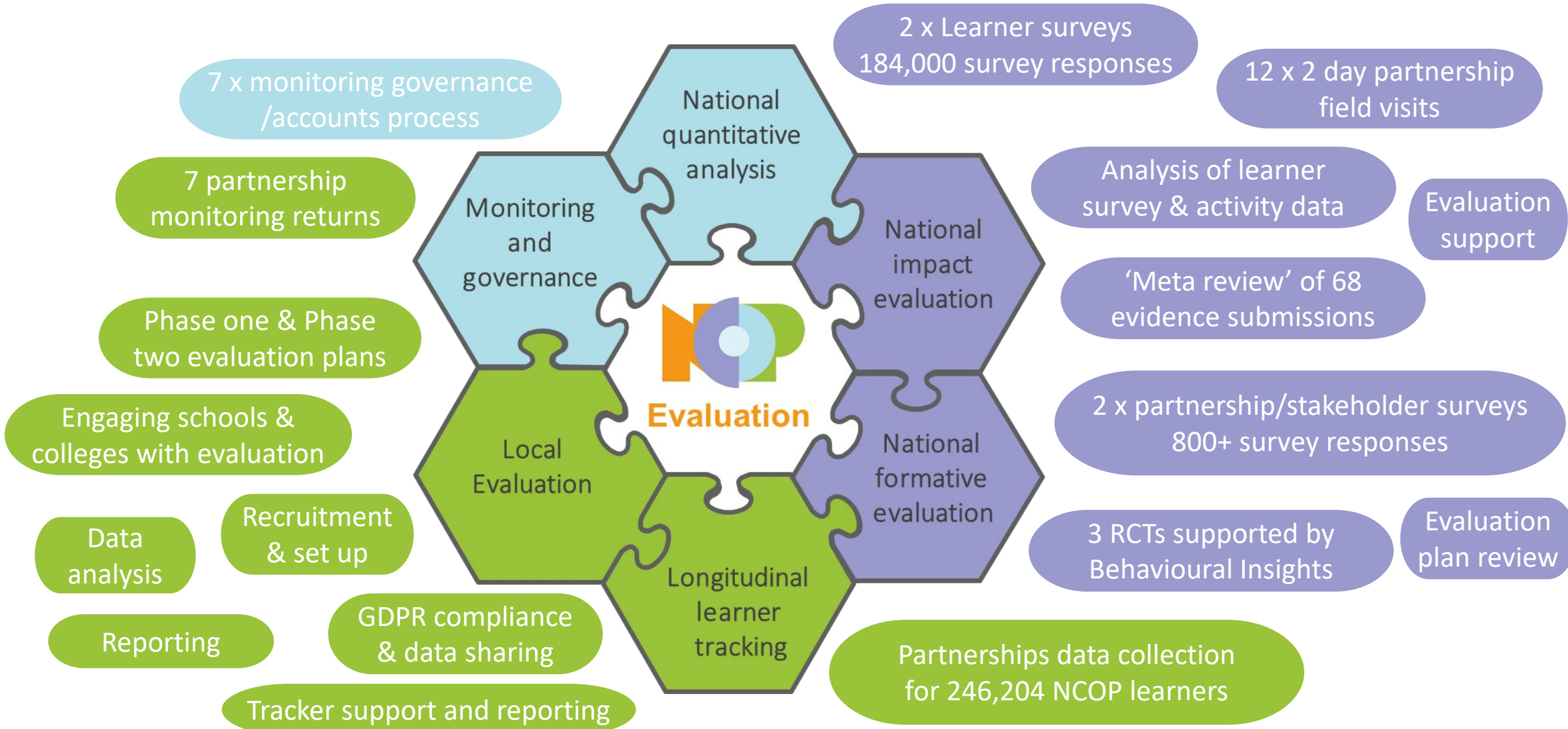


NCOP & learner cohorts



NCOP phase one evaluation activity

- OfS activity
- Partnership activity
- Externally commissioned





Lindsey Bowes

Sarah Tazzyman

NCOP independent evaluation



NCOP: Making change through collaboration

End of Phase 1 findings from the national formative and impact evaluation

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Activities completed during Phase 1

Formative evaluation

- Annual online survey of partnership staff and stakeholders
- 12, two-day field visits to a cross section of p'ships
- Review of local evaluation evidence

Impact evaluation

- Longitudinal learner survey linked to national tracking
- Three Randomised Control Trials:
 - E-mentoring
 - Text nudging
 - Summer school

Capacity Building

- 5 webinars
- Resource portal
- Support to develop local evaluation plans in line with national framework
- Case management to support engagement in impact evaluation

Programme implementation and delivery

The foundations are laid...

- NCOP builds on long tradition of collaboration between FE and HE in support of WP objectives
- The targeted nature of NCOP has presented some issues and challenged established ways of working
- It has taken time to cement strategic relationships, recruit appropriate staff, secure buy-in from schools and colleges and develop systems and processes

...however,

- NCOP has provided impetus for new operating models, stakeholder engagement, innovative approaches to delivery and building evaluation capacity and strengthening the evidence base on 'what works'

Key achievements

- **Extended reach** of individual partnership members and addressed '**cold spots**' in provision
- Facilitated **access to knowledge and expertise** for individual members from within the partnership
- **Shifted from a fixed menu to a more tailored offer** that addresses needs of schools/FECs and pupils throughout their journey from Yr 9 -13

Key achievements

- **Improved access to high quality IAG** to ensure post-16 and post-18 decisions are well-informed
- **Co-location of staff** boosts capacity of schools/FECs to engage in NCOP and supports CPD; this in turn can help to sustain the programme in the longer term
- **Fresh ideas and innovative approaches** to engaging pupils and other key 'influencers' developed in response to unique challenges of NCOP

Supporting teacher CPD - NEACO

- Loughborough University campus visit for PE students
- Raise awareness of the opportunity to study sport at a prestigious HEP and range of subjects within the discipline
- Positive impact on teachers' (and pupils') knowledge of sport and HE which has been cascaded to other school staff



Parent comedy events - HOP

- Fun, engaging event designed to increase parents/carers' knowledge of HE in a relaxed, informal and friendly environment.
- Q&A with a comedian who had recently started university
- Event hosted on campus to provide parents with a 'snapshot' experience of campus life.



Areas for development

Issues for consideration

- Membership and structure of governing bodies
- Moving beyond learner feedback
- Communicating aims and differentiating NCOP from wider offer

Recommendations

- Strategic v operational focus; synergy with other initiatives
- Embed learner voices in planning and delivery
- Collaboration with schools/FECs; mechanisms for engaging partnership staff; marketing

Table discussion

In what way are local and national evaluation findings helping to shape and influence your partnership's activities during Phase 2?

The emerging impact of NCOP

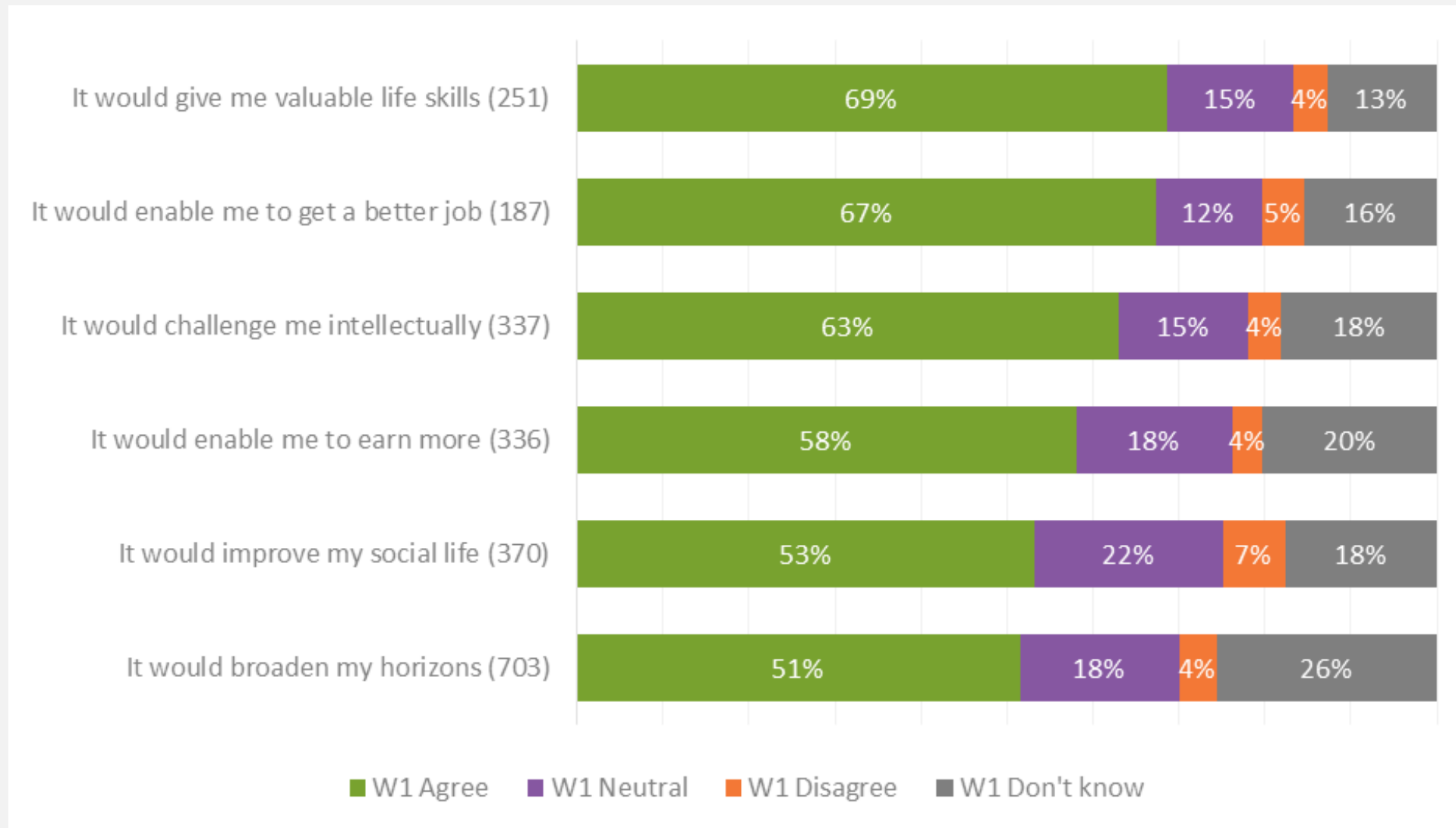
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Intensity and outcomes of outreach interventions

- A sustained and progressive programme of activities for learners is crucial. Engagement in multiple activities is more likely to deliver positive outcomes than one-off interventions.
- Positive shift in learner knowledge and awareness about HE
 - A sizeable proportion of learners have shifted their perceptions towards HE from '*don't know*' to '*agree*'.
- Early indications that some interventions are associated with positive learner outcomes, but in many instances evidence is still inconclusive:
 - Campus visits and mentoring associated with positive outcomes
 - RCTs all non-significant
 - Qualitative evidence suggest that interventions are beneficial

Shift in learner perceptions from 'Don't Know' at baseline to 'Agree' at Wave 1



Impact of summer schools – London NCOP case study

- 4-day residential to Liverpool Hope University for Yr11/12 students offered a range of benefits:
 - Increased student networking opportunities
 - Renewed enthusiasm towards schoolwork
 - Increased interest in progressing to university
 - Enhanced social and cultural capital



Impact on different groups of learners

- NCOP is having a differential impact on sub-groups of learners, with more positive outcomes for:
 - Females
 - Older year groups
 - Learners without a disability
 - White learners
 - Learners who know someone at university
 - Those living in areas of relatively low deprivation
- Findings highlight importance of targeted and tailored interventions for specific groups. Particularly important for BAME, disabled and most disadvantaged learners as analysis shows these learners are less confident and knowledgeable about their ability to progress to HE.

Building the evidence base

Evidencing the impact of NCOP

Key achievements

- Evidence of effectiveness of delivery (*process* evaluation).
- Impact evidence for different interventions is starting to emerge at local level.
- Increased capacity within partnerships to undertake evaluation.

Developing evidence in Phase 2

- Increased focus on *impact* evaluation to develop fuller understanding of what works.
- Explore use of methods to evaluate NCOP learner outcomes against a comparison group.
- Increased use of monitoring, tracking and administrative data to inform evaluation.

Randomised Control Trials (RCTs)

Intervention	Outcome	Main findings
Online mentoring (SUN/Brightside) with Y12 college learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Aspirations & knowledge- HE progression	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Analysis revealed no significant impact across all 3 trials on learner knowledge about HE and intentions to apply.- Qualitative findings revealed evidence of positive impact on learner confidence and knowledge about various aspect of HE.
Text-based nudging intervention (NEACO) with Y11 and Y13 learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- HE Knowledge- HE progression- Attainment and subject choices	
Summer School (GHWY, LiNCHigher, HOP) with Y10 learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- HE knowledge- Aspirations- Likelihood to apply	

RCT lessons learned

- Secure strategic buy-in from all parties involved in the trial
- Review required skills and capacity required to design and implement the trial
- Set realistic timelines and test feasibility
- Implement clear communication channels between strategic and operational teams, and schools/FECs
- Anticipate and address ethical concerns and tensions that may arise as a result of pressure to achieve operational targets

Table discussion

In what way are local and national evaluation findings helping to shape and influence your partnership's activities during Phase 2?

Looking ahead to Phase 2 of the national impact evaluation

Recommendations for OfS

- Review the NCOP brand to ensure a national identity
- Future evaluation of NCOP:
 - Access to national administrative datasets
 - Collaborative evaluation activity to enable larger evaluation activity
 - Larger scale RCT trial
- Building partnership evaluation capacity and capability

Schedule for impact evaluation in Phase 2

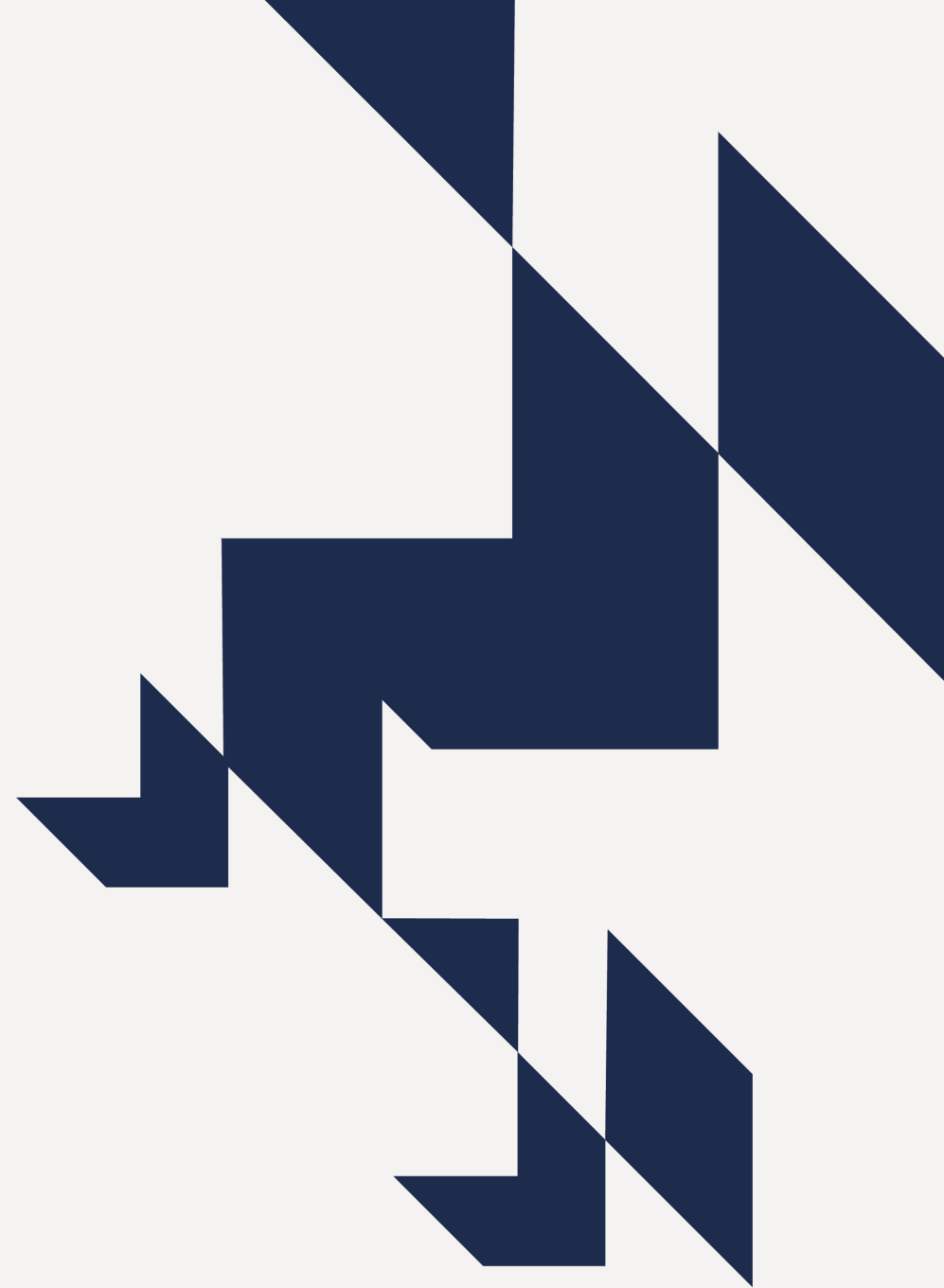
➤ Participant Learner survey

- Wave 2 - October 2019 to December 2019
- Wave 3 - early launch April/May 2020, main survey launch Sept 2020,
- Leavers survey - Nov 2019 and Nov 2020

➤ Call for evidence

- Open call for local evaluation evidence
- Three formal calls: Feb 2020, Nov 2020, June 2021
- Submit impact evaluation evidence at any point to: NCOP@cfe.org.uk

Look forward to phase
two and beyond



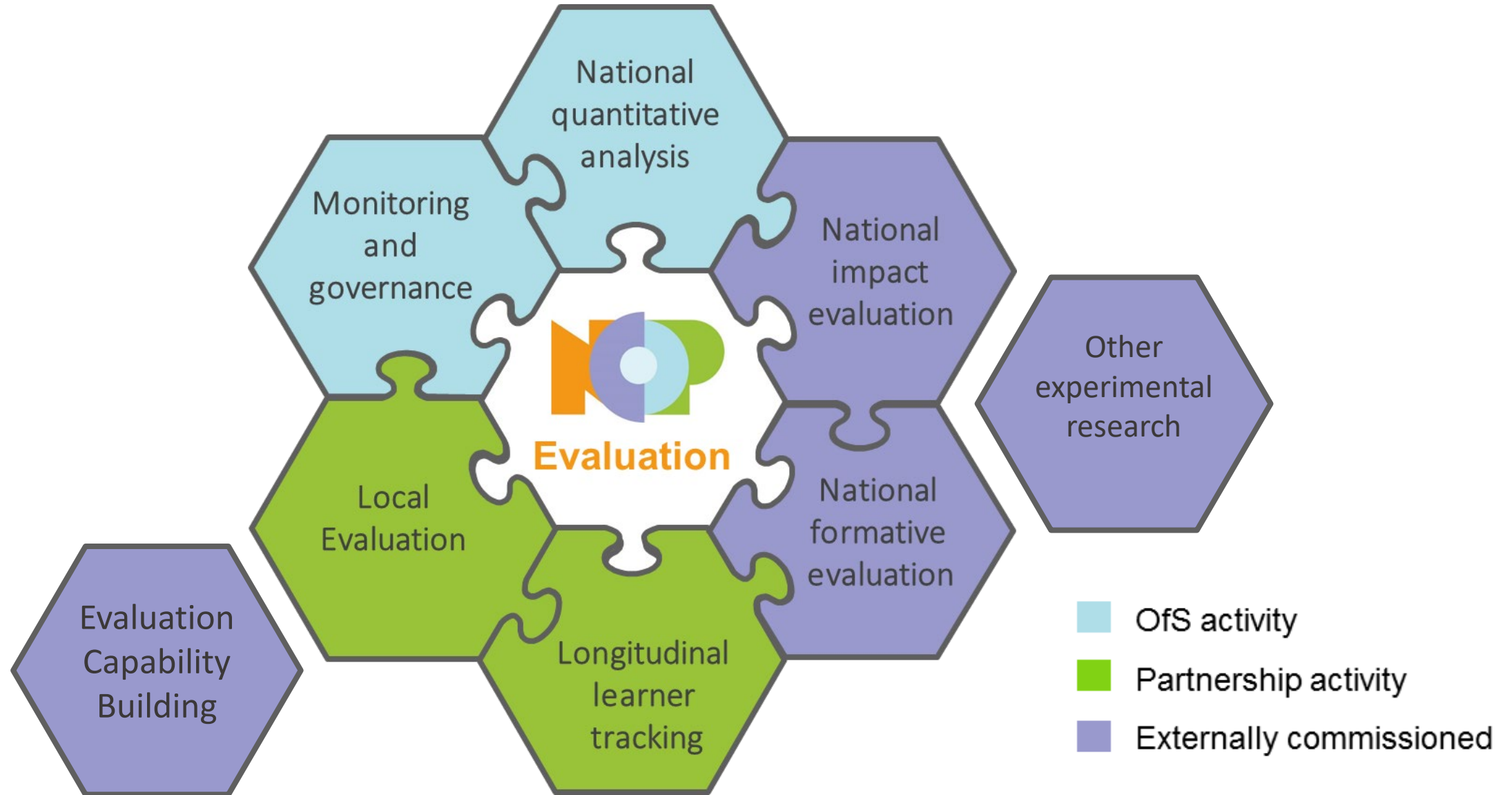
OfS response to CFE findings / recommendations

- Commit support for CFE access to national datasets
- Branding & marketing activity to strengthen programme's national identity
- Support partnerships in responding to CFE's recommendations
- Strengthen expectations of partnership evaluation
- Feed emerging impact evidence and learning to TASO

Looking forward to phase two evaluation

- CFE impact evaluation - learner survey analysis with comparison groups
- Reshape formative evaluation to focus on outreach hubs and other key questions emerging from phase one
- New experimental research – learning lessons from phase one, with direction from TASO
- Capability building support in place for partnership local evaluation
- OfS first quantitative analysis of national datasets (NPD/ HESA / UCAS)
- Introducing new tracker monitoring return
- Focus on NCOP evaluation legacy – impact on the wider sector

NCOP phase two evaluation activity



A man with grey hair and glasses, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and patterned tie, is smiling and holding a microphone. The microphone has the word 'BLOCKBUSTER' repeated in a stylized font. The background consists of a honeycomb pattern of hexagons in shades of blue and yellow, with various letters (A, E, J, M, P, H, Y) visible in some of the hexagons. A yellow speech bubble with a blue border is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Thanks for
listening! Don't
forget to read the
evaluation report

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