

PRESS RELEASE

Northern Ireland's Skills Crisis: Career Guidance Offers Key to Economic Growth

CDI Launches Valuing Careers Campaign at Stormont

Belfast, Northern Ireland – February 18, 2025 – The Career Development Institute (CDI) will launch its Valuing Careers campaign at Northern Ireland’s Stormont Assembly today, addressing the pressing skills crisis and its implications for economic growth.

Stormont’s Minister for the Economy, Dr Caoimhe Archibald MLA, is scheduled to give opening remarks about the campaign and will highlight the urgent need for targeted career support in the area.

The Valuing Careers campaign is underpinned by a comprehensive YouGov survey of 5,004 UK working-age adults, commissioned by the CDI, which seeks to deepen awareness of the value career development provides for individuals, the economy and society.

The research provides an in-depth understanding of the career aspirations of adults across the UK, as well as the challenges they face in achieving them – such as low confidence and caring or parental responsibilities. It highlights the value people gain when they engage with professional careers guidance as well as the barriers to accessing such support.

The Northern Ireland Audit Office September 2024 report outlined the urgent need for significant improvements in skills development to meet economic ambitions, citing that 35% of job vacancies in Northern Ireland are due to skills shortages, which is significantly hampering business performance and economic growth. This skills deficit is costing the region dearly, with more than 40% of employers reporting delays in developing new products or services and loss of business to competitors.

"Northern Ireland's economic success is being limited by these skills shortages," said David Morgan, Chief Executive of the CDI. "Our Valuing Careers research demonstrates that career guidance is a powerful tool in enabling people to progress in their careers - developing new skills, taking on new responsibilities and increasing their income – which all contributes to the economy.

“By highlighting the support available from the Careers Service as well as private and employer-funded careers guidance, we hope that more people recognise the value they can gain from speaking to a qualified professional about their career aspirations.”

Key findings from the CDI's Valuing Careers research show:

- Only 54% of adults feel positive about their future career prospects, and there is a clear link between career positivity and feeling positive about life.
- 75% of adults have career aspirations but 80% anticipate barriers to achieving them.
- Only 15% of adults have sought professional careers guidance since leaving education.
- Yet 86% of people who received professional careers support reported substantive benefits.
- 62% believe they would benefit from career support but lack awareness of available services.

Based on the results of its research, the CDI's Valuing Careers campaign aims to raise awareness of the value that people can gain from working with a qualified career development professional. As well as accessing support from the Careers Service, the UK Register of Career Development Professionals lists members of the CDI who are qualified to offer careers guidance.

As Northern Ireland grapples with its skills and employment challenges, the Valuing Careers campaign demonstrates how professional career guidance can fuel economic growth and help individuals navigate an increasingly complex job market. The Stormont event marks the beginning of a series of regional launches across the UK, bringing together policymakers, educators, and industry leaders to address the critical role of career development in economic recovery and growth.

ENDS

For more information on the Valuing Careers campaign and the upcoming Stormont event, please contact:

CDI Campaigns Manager Naomi Snelling: naomi.snelling@thecdi.net

Notes for Editor:

About the CDI: The [Career Development Institute](#) (CDI) is the UK's professional body for all aspects of career development, supporting its members to work to the highest standards and championing the profession. It sets standards for professional practice, including the [CDI Code of Ethics](#), which are recognised by government and manages the [UK Register of Career Development Professionals](#). It awards [the Qualification in Career Development](#) and deliver training through [the CDI Academy](#) for those looking to

enter the sector and progress in the profession. CDI also provides [resources](#), [training](#) events and networking for members.