

A Manifesto for Career Development in Scotland

The people of Scotland deserve a good career

The Career Development Institute (CDI) is the UK's leading professional body for the career development sector. This is our 'manifesto' for the Scottish Parliament elections in May 2026. Find us at: www.thecdi.net/

We recommend that all parties fielding candidates in this election should work to:

1 Invest in career education and guidance

Parties should commit to:

- Understanding that the value of this investment is recognised by inter-governmental bodies (1)
- Recognising the value the public places on their career, and the unmet needs for career support in the community (2)
- Strong structured support to school career education and employer links, with access to accreditation

2 Re-affirm the commitment to lifelong guidance

Parties should commit to:

- Recognising that career transitions happen not just for young people leaving education, but throughout adult life
- Recognising that an inclusive approach means support over an extended period for disadvantaged groups

3 Re-affirm the commitment to the provision of a national careers service

Parties should commit to:

- Recognising the value of economies of scale, consistency, and integrated systems provided by a single national service provider

4 Share funding fairly and sustainably across the education system

Parties should commit to:

- Ensuring that those attending further education and vocational training programmes are not treated less favourably than university students
- Recognising that those not yet ready for vocationally specific programmes still need financial support and provision to help them grow and overcome barriers
- Recognising the need to develop a sustainable funding model for the higher education sector

References

Investing in Career Guidance: Joint statement of the Interagency Working Group on Career Guidance (2025). European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP); European Commission; European Training Foundation (ETF); Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD); International Labour Organisation (ILO); United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO); World Bank Group. <https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/publications/8900>

Valuing Careers Research Project (2024) Career Development Institute. <https://www.thecdi.net/policy-campaigns-and-media/valuing-careers/valuing-careers-research>