

***“Lifelong career development for all:
careers services that work for everyone”***

Manifesto for General Election 2017

Our proposals

- **The current National Careers Service should be reconstituted into a truly all-age career development service**
- **All adults should have access to a mid-life career review**
- **All careers advisers should be professionally qualified**
- **All schools should be encouraged to adopt the Gatsby benchmarks of good practice and be required to achieve the Quality in Careers Standard**
- **The statutory duty to include careers education in the curriculum should be reinstated and extended to age 18**
- **All schools should be encouraged to appoint a careers leader**
- **Career development co-ordinators should be appointed in all local areas, to support schools and careers leaders**
- **The Government should initiate a campaign to improve the prestige of careers guidance**

The Career Development Institute (CDI) is the UK-wide professional body for everyone working in careers education; careers information, advice and guidance; career coaching and career counselling. We have over 5,000 members, working with people of all ages, from young people in schools and colleges through to young workers and adults in training, work and looking for work.

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Lifelong career development support

This General Election is taking place at a time of great uncertainty nationally. Whatever form Brexit takes, it is likely to bring both opportunities and challenges. For the UK to remain competitive and for the economy to grow in a global market, the nation will need to be more self-sufficient in developing the skills of its workforce. This will start in schools and colleges, by building a technical and vocational education system equal to the standing of our academic pathways. It will continue by developing a strong provision of lifelong learning, including strengthened adult education and workplace training. Throughout we will need to ensure a good match between the skills that individuals develop and the demands of the labour market. For the health of the nation and the well-being of its citizens, we will need to enable everyone to be well informed and have fulfilling and successful careers.

We know that individuals are likely to have ten or more jobs, and at least one change of occupation, in their working lives. They will face a fast-changing labour market and may experience periods of unemployment or under-employment. Individuals will need to update their knowledge and skills on a regular basis: lifelong learning will become the norm for all. Career development support will need to be available throughout their lives. Good quality careers education, advice and guidance must be provided while young people are in full-time education, to help them with their choice of routes within school and college, and to help prepare them for further choices and transitions once they leave education and training. But guidance must also continue to be accessible throughout their adult, working lives. Careers in the 21st century require lifelong support.

This manifesto sets out our proposals for career development support services in England. The UK election determines careers policy only in England: policy on careers guidance in other parts of the UK has been transferred to the devolved administrations.

The current provision of career development support

Career development support services in England are no longer fit for purpose. The introduction of the National Careers Service in 2012 represents a missed opportunity to establish in England a truly all-age careers guidance service. The service does not work for everyone. It does not provide face-to-face guidance to young people and it is not adequately resourced to reach all the adults who could use its services. The current outcome funding measures focus on limited short-term goals, rather than longer term career development.

The national careers and Connexions services, locally-delivered, that existed for young people for almost 40 years have been dismantled and responsibility for securing access to careers guidance for pupils has been devolved to individual schools, with no additional funding, resulting in patchy provision. The Careers & Enterprise Company helps schools and colleges to connect with business but, as the Company's own research shows, encounters with employers are not enough: young people also need access to careers education and to careers guidance.

The outgoing Government acknowledged the weakness of the current provision by promising to publish a comprehensive strategy for careers later this year.

Our guiding principles

- Career development services should be available to all citizens throughout life: they must work for everyone.
- It is Government's role to promote the benefits of investing in career development, to incentivise individuals, education and training providers and employers to invest in career support and to provide support when such services would not otherwise be accessible to individuals.
- Career development services should be provided by professionally qualified careers practitioners.
- Robust quality assurance frameworks are needed to hold all strands of provision to account.

Our proposals

- 1. The current National Careers Service should be reconstituted into a truly all-age, lifelong career development service that offers support to people of all ages: young people in schools and colleges, young adults who have left education and adults, both in employment and looking for work. This will both facilitate economic growth and promote social mobility.**

The service should set out a clear framework of support that must be accessible to everyone, not just those in certain targeted groups, and implemented at a local level. It should be publicly funded and monitored regularly against identified accountability measures. The service should be located in places that are easily accessible to clients of all ages.

- 2. We endorse the recommendation, in John Cridland's review of the state pension age and the research undertaken by the Learning and Work Institute, that all adults should have access to a mid-life career review.**

Such a review would help people plan their later working lives. They will be working for more years and will need help if they are to successfully navigate a changing labour market and increasing automation.

- 3. To ensure the quality of support provided, those providing careers information and advice should be qualified to Level 4, and those providing careers guidance should be professionally qualified to a minimum of Level 6.**

As part of a wider strategy to build the capacity of the service, the Government should establish a bursary scheme to incentivise the training of staff and the upskilling of existing Level 4 practitioners. We also support the CIPD's recommendation that the current apprenticeship levy should be broadened to a more flexible training levy, enabling more individuals and employers to benefit from it.

- 4. To ensure that young people receive the high quality support they deserve, all schools and colleges should be encouraged to adopt the Gatsby benchmarks of good practice and be required to achieve the Quality in Careers Standard.**

Schools and colleges should be supported and incentivised to work towards the benchmarks with development funding, conditional upon committing to, and then achieving, the quality standard or re-accreditation.

5. The statutory duties to include careers and employability education in the curriculum should be reinstated and extended from age 11 to age 18.

This will ensure that young people are helped to develop the career management skills and employability skills required for working life.

6. All schools should be encouraged to appoint a middle or senior leader to take on overall responsibility for their provision of careers support and the Government should work with the professional body to establish programmes of training and professional development for careers leaders.

Without clear leadership for careers from within the school, young people are at risk of not having access to the high quality support they need.

7. Career development co-ordinators should be appointed in each local area, to support schools and careers leaders, working alongside the enterprise co-ordinators established by The Careers & Enterprise Company.

Schools have been required to take on full responsibility for careers with no additional funding and very limited support. They need practical help with putting into place the careers education, information, advice and guidance infrastructure, as specified by the Gatsby benchmarks, and the individual support young people need.

8. The Government should work with the careers profession to improve the profile and prestige of careers guidance.

It is in both the country's interest and individuals' interest to invest in career development and a public campaign to promote the support available would contribute to economic prosperity, social mobility and our well-being.