

Professionally qualified careers leaders in schools

On 16 August *Schools Week* reported that the teacher training charity Teach First has called for an apprenticeship qualification to give every school a trained careers middle leader. The report went on to say that the role would involve developing and leading a whole school strategy for careers and employability, and that the proposal has been backed by The Careers & Enterprise Company and the teaching union ATL.

The Career Development Institute (CDI) is the UK-wide professional body for everyone working in careers education, careers information, advice and guidance and careers coaching. We share the view that every school should appoint a careers leader who has responsibility for the provision of careers support for all pupils. Indeed, we promoted the idea of school careers leaders, with access to appropriate CPD, in a briefing published in January 2017¹.

Five years ago, changes in education policy in England gave schools full responsibility for careers support. In addition to providing careers information and careers education in the curriculum, schools now have a statutory duty to secure access for pupils to independent and impartial careers guidance. We believe that careers guidance must be provided by professionally qualified careers advisers. Furthermore we advocate that schools should provide access to such advice and guidance within an overall careers programme that meets the eight benchmarks identified by the Gatsby Foundation. To achieve this requires a step-change in how careers education, information, advice and guidance is managed and clear leadership from within the school.

Our vision for the role is that the careers leader could be a senior leader or a middle leader with clear line management links to a senior leader. Many careers leaders move into the role from teaching positions, but they may also be recruited from a variety of other backgrounds, including qualified careers advisers. The CDI believes that all careers leaders should have access to CPD that equips them with the knowledge, understanding and skills required to fulfil the tasks for effective leadership of careers. We also believe that such CPD should offer the opportunity to gain accreditation and a qualification.

We already offer a professional qualification that meets the National Occupational Standards (NOS) for careers leaders, through the three-unit, Level 6, competency-based Certificate in Careers Leadership. The CDI is also currently working with sector employers to establish a Higher Apprenticeship Standard for career development professionals. It is early days but Higher Apprentices are likely to have the choice from two professional level qualifications, one of which will qualify them to undertake the roles of both a career adviser and a career leader and the other will qualify them as a career adviser and subject to choosing appropriate optional units will also qualify them to work as a career leader. We see this as key to building capacity in the careers sector. By

¹ *Careers Leaders in Schools*. A CDI Briefing, January 2017

http://www.thecdi.net/write/Careers_Leaders_in_Schools_-_CDI_January_2017.pdf

taking advantage of the Higher Apprenticeship schools could also offset some of the apprenticeship levy that they now have to pay.

Commenting on the *Schools Week* report, Virginia Isaac, President of the CDI, said that the Institute is campaigning for all schools to have a careers leader and for CPD for the role to be made available. "We are contributing to Teach First's current careers and employability leaders' pilot. We are also working with employers to develop a Higher Apprenticeship Standard for career development professionals and we would be pleased to work with the charity to ensure that the needs of career leaders are met."

Ends...

Notes

1. The Career Development Institute (CDI) is the UK-wide professional body for the career development sector, with a membership of over 4,000.
2. The CDI is the awarding body for the Level 7 Qualification in Career Development offered by seven universities throughout the UK.
3. The CDI launched the CDI Academy in spring 2017 to provide Level 6 qualifications in career development.

The Certificate in Careers Leadership, targeted at career coordinators, career teachers and other staff working as middle and senior career leaders in schools in England and Wales, was launched in summer 2017 and the first courses will run this autumn.

4. Career professionals can join the CDI as individual members through the website – www.thecdi.net The CDI offers a range of membership packages for individuals and affiliate membership for schools and organisations.
5. For more information contact: Chief Executive, Jan Ellis – jan.ellis@thecdi.net or Professional Development Manager, Claire Johnson, claire.johnson@thecdi.net or Membership Services Manager, Dan Hope, dan.hope@thecdi.net