



Scottish Parliament election May 2021: Briefing for all political parties

## The role of career guidance in unleashing Scotland's potential

### Career guidance makes sense for individuals and nations

A consensus has emerged among international bodies that [Investing in Career Guidance](#) makes sense. European Union agencies, together with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) argue that:

*“Effective career guidance helps individuals to reach their potential, economies to become more efficient and societies to become fairer. It provides people with personalised, impartial and timely information and support to make informed decisions about their lives. It acts as a lubricant for developing and nurturing human talent to power innovation, creativity and competitiveness. It helps to implement lifelong approaches to learning and active approaches to labour market engagement and transition. As the working world becomes increasingly complex, career guidance is becoming ever more important to individuals, employers and to society...”*

### Building back fairer: A key role for career guidance services

COVID-19 has intensified existing socio-economic inequalities. People in households that are relatively disadvantaged are less able to avoid both the virus itself, and the economic consequences it brings in its wake. They are less likely to be able to work and study online, pushing their career development into the slow lane. Responding to inequality is a key purpose of career guidance policy and practice. We have seen:

- Forced career changes, and a need for retraining, due to economic downturn in some industries that are important in the Scottish economy
- Young people's confidence in transition from school has been affected by lockdown
- Parents, particularly mothers, being unable to progress their careers due to home schooling

### We recommend all parties advocate for additional investment in career guidance services to promote recovery

Additional resources are needed in those sectors where service users are most disadvantaged, but are also least likely to have access to well-developed professional career guidance services. This means:

1. More qualified professional career advisers are needed to work with unemployed adults and young people through:
  - o Government welfare-to-work programmes, and
  - o Community employability agencies (third sector or local council).
2. Resources to enhance career education, information, advice, and guidance for students in colleges of further education.

**The Career Development Institute** is the professional body for everyone working in the fields of career education, information, advice and guidance: [The CDI](#)