



**Young Women's
Experiences of Careers Advice
and Guidance in Wales**

CDI Cymru Wales Forum

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Purpose of the research

- The research explores how well careers services in Wales are meeting young women's needs and seeks to identify and understand the challenges as we navigate and recover from the Covid-19 pandemic.



Research Methods



Research methods



- The research was carried out by the research team at [Gatehouse ICS](#)
- Desk-based research to identify available career services to young women in Wales.
- Survey with young women aged 14-25 living or studying in Wales
 - 252 usable responses
 - 72% of the respondents are 14-18 years old, 26% are 19-25 years old.
- Survey with Career Service Providers
 - Response from 13 different organizations
- Interviews with Career Service Providers
 - 6 one-to-one interviews



Young women's experiences with career advice services



Key results from the survey with young women

Gap between awareness and use of career services

- Careers Wales was the most well-known, with **90%** of respondents being aware of it, followed by UCAS, which **85%** were aware of.
- Highest percentages of respondents indicating that they had used Careers Wales (**58%**) and UCAS (**50%**).
- For every careers services, there are large gaps between awareness and use.

First contact with services comes too late at 14-16 years old

- Over 70% young women had accessed career services for the first time between the ages of 14 – 16 years old
- 19% of those 218 respondents noted that they had ‘never accessed’ career services

Accessing career support services

	Age 14-18	Age 19-25
Website	48%	38%
In person	24%	42%
E-mail	19%	29%



Key results from the survey with young women

Work experience

- 53% of all respondents have done work experience, versus 47% who have not done work experience
- The most common route for accessing work experience is through school for older age group, personal networks for younger age group.

Soft skills

- 16% of respondents have received support in developing soft skills.
- 62% had not; and 22% were not sure if they had.

New industries and green jobs

- 16% of respondents have received careers advice about 'new and emerging industries'.
- 97% of respondents answered 'no', 'not sure' or 'I don't know what is meant by green jobs'.



Impact of the pandemic



Key results from the survey with young women

Has the pandemic affected what job or career you would like?

	Number of respondents	% of Respondents
Yes, in a positive way	30	16%
Yes, in a negative way	33	18%
No	60	32%
Not sure	63	34%

Access to career services during the pandemic

- 42% of the 186 respondents stated that the pandemic has not affected their access to career support
- 23% noted their access negatively affected

Positive way

- Increasing interest in education, healthcare or similar sectors
- more time to consider and explore what was important to them in a career
- improved work-life balance
- Advantages of increasing digital access

Negative way

- disruptions in their education, work or experiences
- Demotivation about some industries such as hospitality, entertainment and creative industries
- Decline in mental health



Areas for improvement and recommendations



Key areas for improvement



Availability of Careers Support and Delivery Methods

- Close the gap between awareness and use of careers services
- Earlier contact with services
- Move away from one-size fits all delivery
- Create better links between career services and parents
- Improve and increase support and training for teachers

Content of careers support

- More targeted support and interventions for women
- Opportunities for young women to hear from role models and access mentoring
- Information about new and emerging industries, including 'green jobs'
- Financial advice as part of wider careers education and support
- More support around work experience and developing work-related skills



Recommendations

Availability of careers support and methods of delivery:

1. Welsh Government should increase investment into career education and guidance
2. Hybrid delivery of career services should become the norm
3. Welsh Government should ensure effective careers support and education in schools

Content of careers support

4. Career service providers must ensure they include information on new and emerging industries and 'green jobs' in their delivery
5. Careers Wales should take action to widen access to and improve take-up of work experience and work-related education.
6. Welsh Government and Careers Wales should work with partners to increase access to mentoring, opportunities for networking and opportunities to meet relatable and diverse role models
7. Welsh Government should invest in financial advice and education for young people, delivered either via the new curriculum or as part of Careers Wales services
8. Welsh Government should invest in more targeted interventions that provide careers advice and guidance to women and are designed with women's needs in mind



Recommendations

Careers services infrastructure and profession:

- 9.** Careers Wales and representative bodies such as the Career Development Institute (CDI) should work together to create a resource centre for all career providers to access up-to-date information on the labour market, emerging jobs and sectors, and work to bring consistency to the advice and support available
- 10.** All career providers should make equality and unconscious bias training mandatory for all involved in delivering careers education and advice. This training must focus on achieving equitable outcomes not just equality of opportunity

Perception and understanding of careers services:

- 11.** Further research should be undertaken to understand what is causing the significant gap between awareness of careers advice services and engagement with those services
- 12.** Careers Wales, Welsh Government and career provider industry bodies need to create and communicate a shared definition of what constitutes career advice and guidance to improve the perception and understanding of career services.



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Thank you...



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