



Investigating the Development and
Implementation of an
Accredited Continuous Professional
Development Framework within the
Hair and Beauty Sector

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Acknowledgements

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Research and Report by:



Research Team:

Dr Yvonne Delaney (Director, Management Development Unit)
Siobhan Kennedy MSc (Principal Investigator)
Dr Jennifer Farrell, Dr Deirdre Brady, Maria Ryan MSc.



A woman in a light-colored blouse is applying makeup to another woman's face. The woman being made up is sitting at a table, and the makeup artist is standing. The background is a bright, modern interior with large windows. The scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal filter.

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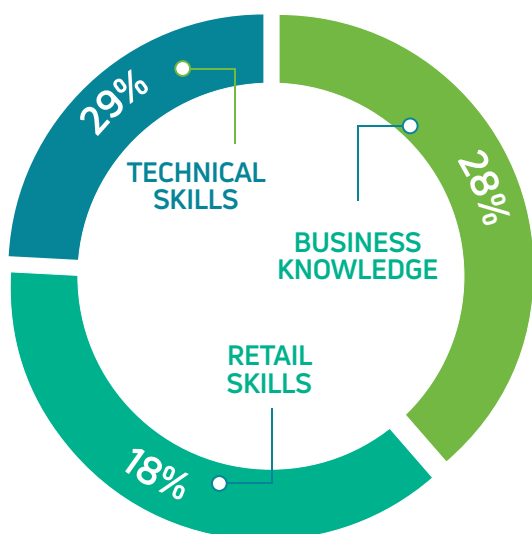
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Key Findings

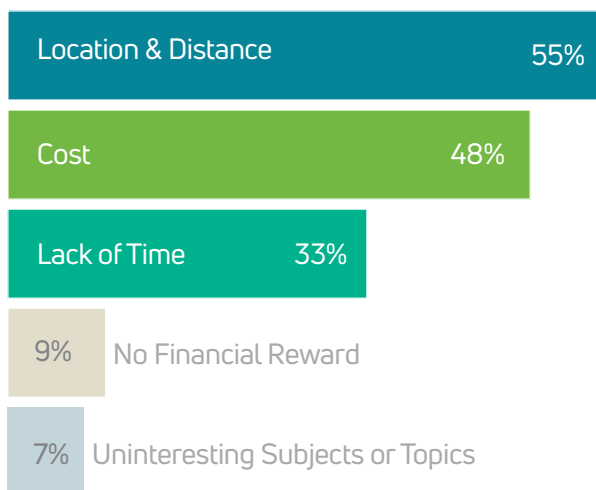
DATA COLLECTION



MANAGERS VIEWS ON GREATEST SKILL GAPS



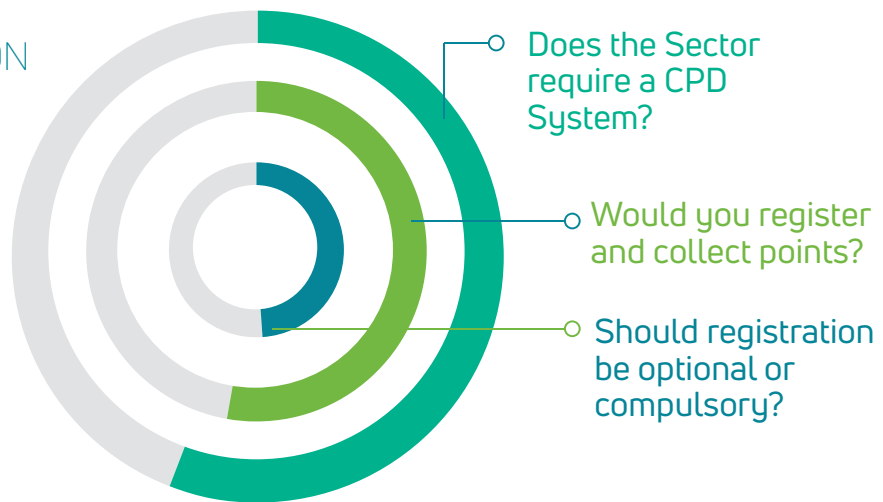
BARRIERS TO TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT



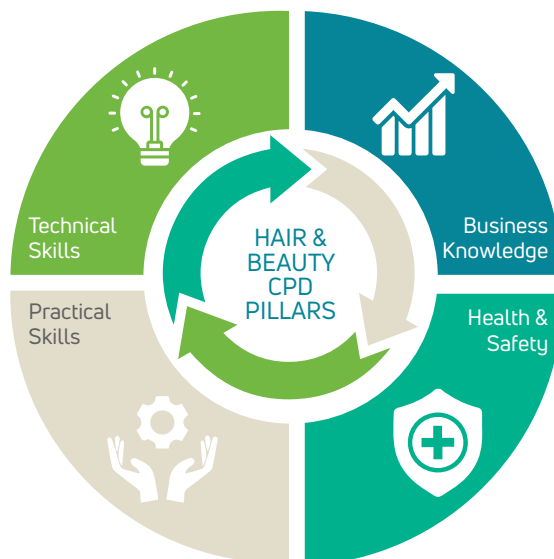
PARTICIPATION IN TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT



VIEWS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF A CPD FRAMEWORK



THE FOUR PILLARS OF THE PROPOSED CPD FRAMEWORK



Foreword

The Hair and Beauty industry has faced significant challenges over the last few years, ranging from a national skills shortage, rising business costs, an unpredictable economic climate, and a vibrant shadow economy, to a global pandemic that shut the industry down for over 41 weeks.

The business environment has been extremely tough for so many small and mid-sized enterprises, yet the resilience and value of the industry is reflected by the economic and societal contributions it delivers nationally. With consumer demand remaining high, this industry is an integral stakeholder and anchor tenant in the business fabric of Irish towns and villages, and one where the future of work and the skills are key to the sector's development.

This is a labor-intensive profession, and the importance of skills and talent cannot be understated. It is often said that "a companies' greatest asset is their people", and we believe this statement to be true. The talented human capital that organisations are so deeply reliant on, is the foundations on which the industry has and will continue to develop from. Talent that transforms business by ensuring customer satisfaction is a valuable commodity and should be developed and nurtured through continuous professional development.

For decades the Hair and Beauty industry has recognised the importance of upskilling and continuous professional development (CPD). To date however, there has been a lack of formal recognition for the process. This research highlights how the absence of a CPD framework adversely impacts the industry and identifies the benefits of implementing a formal framework. It provides recommendations that, if implemented, will support enhanced workforce development, sustainability, and industry recognition.

We look forward to seeing the findings and recommendations of this research coming to life by helping to support and enhance workforce development within the Hair and Beauty industry.





“An investment
in knowledge
always pays the
best interest.”

- Benjamin Franklin

Executive Summary

This research was commissioned and funded by IMAGE Skillnet, a business network of Skillnet Ireland. The purpose of this study was to investigate and make recommendations for the development of a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) framework for the Hair and Beauty sector in Ireland^{1,2}.

According to CSO data (2019), this industry employs 25,800 people, throughout 9,286 businesses and is worth an estimated €2.6bn to the Exchequer³. The rationale for this research is to address a crisis within the industry, primarily involving a lack of professional recognition which is resulting in skill shortages, skill gaps and safety issues which are threatening the future of the sector. There is a real need to boost the professional status of this industry so that more people consider it as a valuable career choice. This will also help to retain more professionals within the mainstream business market.

With ongoing rapid evolution of the industry, training and development is crucial for a business to ensure safe practices and to remain competitive. In fact, this research found that 67% of the professionals surveyed engaged in training and development 2 -3 times per year. The need for a sector wide CPD framework to provide recognition was considerably supported. This research also identified 4 pillars which inform the development of a CPD framework: Technical Skills, Practical Skills, Business Knowledge and Health & Safety. Some of the benefits of this approach included.

- Boosting professional recognition, which could address the skills shortage as the profession would be viewed as a more attractive career choice.
- Elevating the professional status of those who engage in CPD, through public recognition of their competencies and skillsets.
- Increasing health and safety standards.
- Enabling consumers to make more informed choices when choosing whether they seek service from the black market or a reputable professional salon.



- Endorsing training providers resulting in higher quality development opportunities, which meet the needs of the industry.
- Reducing the cost of ongoing professional development through collective participation.

During this research, the Covid 19 pandemic put the

¹ <https://www.imageskillnet.ie/>

² The hair and beauty sector comprises hairdressing, barbering, beauty, nail, makeup and complimentary services and treatments.

³ https://statbank.cso.ie/webserviceclient/datasets.aspx?sp=DB_QLF&SPtext=Labour%20Force%20Survey%20Quarterly%20Series



industry along with many others into chaos. However, this sector soon demonstrated its resilience and creativity. A coalition was quickly formed between business owners, professional bodies, brands, manufacturers, training providers and industry experts to figure out how the sector could be re-booted post-Covid 19. The result was the development of a community of practice. Together this industry adopted new business models and new methods to ensure continuous professional development.

The issues of skill shortages and skill gaps still exist, but this industry has demonstrated its professionalism. The pandemic has also highlighted the significance of this industry to the emotional and psychological well-being of society. Ultimately, what this industry has demonstrated is that they are not just in need of elevated professional recognition and standards, but they are deserving of them.

Main Findings of this Research



There is a general sense that there is a **lack of recognition for the industry**. This is fuelling a skills shortage and skill gaps where it is increasingly difficult to source the required skillset to sustain a business.

Lack of standards, lack of licensing and a lack of a CPD framework are interconnected issues which need to be resolved.

67% of survey respondents participate in training and development activities several times a year, but their efforts are not recognised.

Working within this sector can be very rewarding but these qualities are not clearly communicated. This is viewed as a contributing to the skills shortage.

The **top three drivers of change** within the industry are social media, increased consumer expectations and the influence of professional associations.

The **top three skill gaps** involve **technical skills, business knowledge and retail skills**.

Over 90% of business owners and managers surveyed, felt that a **sector wide CPD framework would be beneficial** in addressing the skill gaps.

The **top three benefits** from ongoing training and development are **increased confidence with skills, increased job satisfaction and increased productivity at work**.

The **top three barriers** to participating in ongoing training and development involve **location and distance to training, cost and lack of time**.

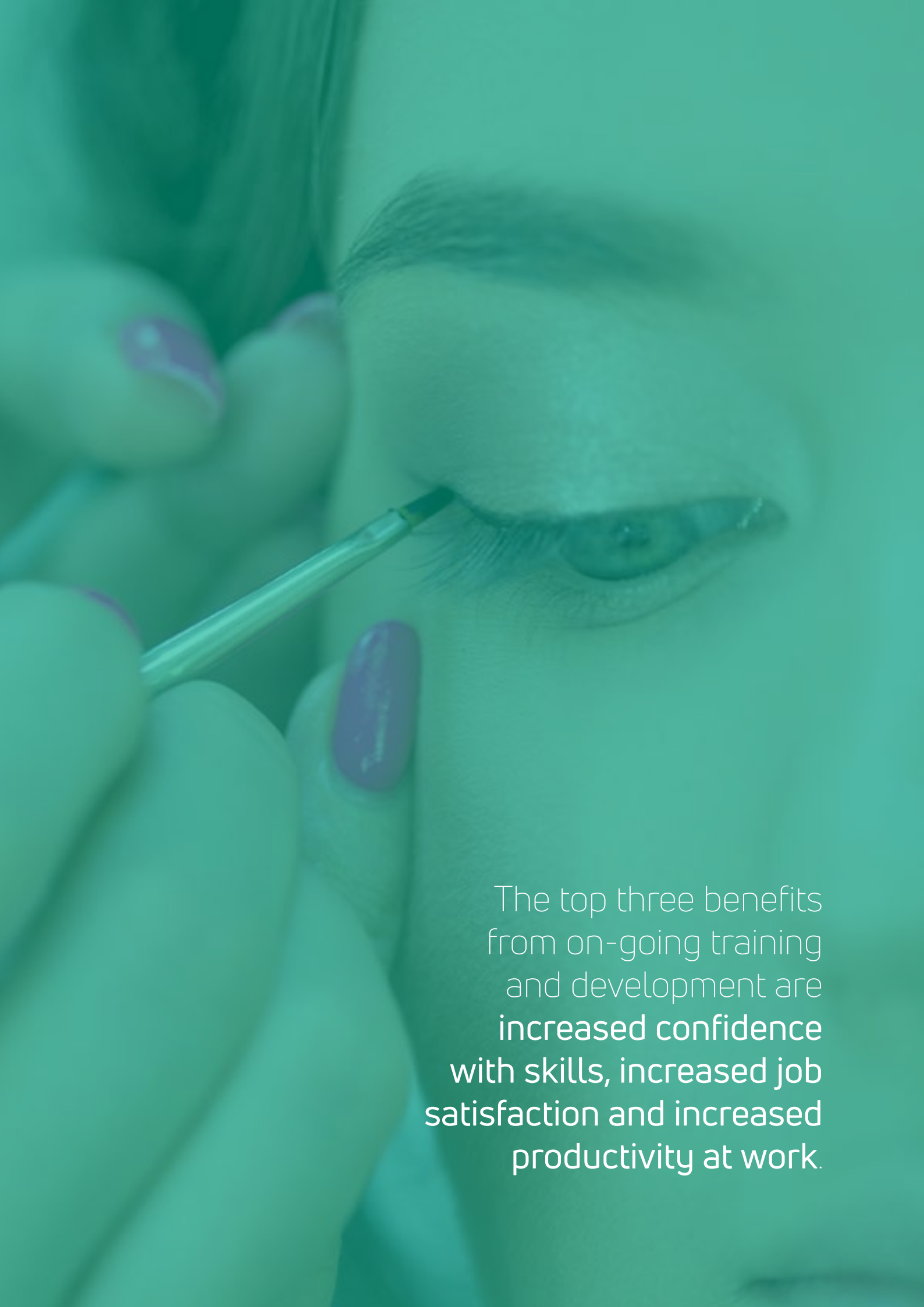
The **industry is divided on whether registration should be voluntary or mandatory**. This research recommends a mandatory tiered approach.

Over half the survey respondents and 100% of the interview and focus group respondents would register and **collect points for training events**.

This research identified 4 pillars which inform the development of a CPD framework: **Technical Skills, Practical Skills, Business Knowledge and Health & Safety**.

Progression to higher education needs to be made more accessible to those working in trades and the service industries. New learning models which include blended options and progressing on a byte size basis with modular programmes would encourage higher participation rates. Industry specific special purpose awards and supplemental awards need to be mapped to the NFQ framework.

One quarter of survey respondents would be willing to pay an annual fee for CPD registration and almost three quarters possibly would. Interview and focus group participants generally felt that individuals would pay a small annual fee once the purpose of the framework was clearly outlined and the benefits were realised.



The top three benefits from on-going training and development are **increased confidence with skills, increased job satisfaction and increased productivity at work.**

1.0 Introduction

This research provides the first known investigation concerning upskilling and talent development within the Hair and Beauty sector in Ireland.

The aims of this study are exploratory and informative with the objective of providing a series of recommendations to develop and implement a continuous professional development (CPD) framework within the industry. Through a series of interviews, focus groups and survey data, this study utilises both the knowledge and experience of those working within the sector to measure attitudes and make recommendations towards the development and implementation of a CPD system.

The rationale for this research is to address a critical skill shortages, skill gaps and to raise the professional recognition of the industry.

It is hoped that by making recommendations on the implementation of a CPD framework, along with mapping some of the career development opportunities and pathways available, that more individuals will view the industry as a valuable career choice.

The Hair and Beauty sector in Ireland is undergoing somewhat of a crisis. In the past, hairdressing and barbering have been downgraded and viewed as default careers. Nowadays, the profession has largely outgrown this stigma. This is attributed to the incredible evolution of the industry in terms of entrepreneurship, creativity, methods and service delivery. Beauty Therapy on the other hand has historically been viewed as a career involving poise, confidence and expertise. However, there are fears that this profession is now in danger of being stigmatised. The reason for this is attributed to a growing trend where individuals attend short programmes and subsequently promote themselves as qualified practitioners. This presents a real health and safety risk and it is de-valuing the profession.

The solution to this problem which taints the entire sector, is to introduce regulation and standards. A mechanism is required to ensure that only qualified practitioners can

provide service. There is also a requirement to emphasize the on-going training and development which is essential to provide service. Once this is highlighted, it will be clear that there is a requirement to recognise these professionals in a meaningful way.

In order to conduct this research, a mixed methods approach was adopted. Mixed methods are viewed as a valid methodology when breadth and depth of data is required. The research is presented as follows; survey data is used to determine the interest and attitudes towards the implementation of a CPD framework within the industry. Interview and focus group data are used to contextualise and give further meaning to the survey data. Where relevant, direct quotes from interview and focus group participants are used. The insights and information gained in this study have been analysed to propose a high-level recommendation for the development and implementation of a sector wide CPD framework.

1.1 Defining Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

CPD stands for Continuing Professional Development and is the term used to describe the learning activities that professionals engage in to develop and enhance their skills and abilities³. According to CIPD, who are a professional body for HR and people development, any form of learning which is designed for an individual to improve and become more effective in the workplace supports CPD⁴. Activities can range from formal educational activities such as instructor-led training courses, workshops or seminars, to more informal approaches such as work-based learning or mentoring. CPD can also include self-directed study such as online courses, YouTube videos and structured reading. For all professions, CPD is critical as it ensures that knowledge and skills are maintained and enhanced to progress professional and personal growth. This contributes to the delivery of a professional service.

Individual Benefits of CPD

- Increases effectiveness and efficiencies in the workplace.
- Assists in career advancement.
- Creates a deeper understanding of what it means to be a professional, along with a greater appreciation of the implications and impacts of your work.
- Contributes to a greater sense of well-being and quality of life.
- Increases public confidence in a profession.

³ <https://cpduk.co.uk/explained>

⁴ <https://www.cipd.ie/learn/cpd/about>

Many trades and professions in Ireland have Government supported CPD initiatives, for instance builders (CIRI)⁵, early childcare workers (Early Childhood Ireland)⁶, and Health & Social Care Workers (CORU)⁷. The types of CPD activities and the recommended engagement hours will depend on the profession. CPD is important for professional, academic, technical and transferable skills. These are skills that can be transferred to many different contexts and include communication, leadership, problem-solving and decision-making, as well as the ability to work as part of a team. As such, CPD is fundamental for career progression and life-long learning.

Ireland's National Skills Strategy 2025⁸ has committed to establishing greater recognition of workplace learning and to develop capacity for recognition of prior learning (RPL). Qualified Hair and Beauty professionals are well placed to demonstrate active engagement in CPD. Of the 314 survey responses, 180 (67%), indicated that they engaged in ongoing training and development several times a year⁹. Yet, outside of the industry, there is no recognition for their efforts. This is thought to be contributing to a skills shortage, where the number of young people choosing a profession in this sector has drastically reduced in recent years.

Certainly, with the growing polarisation of the industry an increasing fear amongst many business owners is that the lack of recognition will lead to increased black-market activity and will further fuel the skills shortage crisis, as the sector is written off as a 'cul-de-sac career'.

How often do you participate in training and development activities?

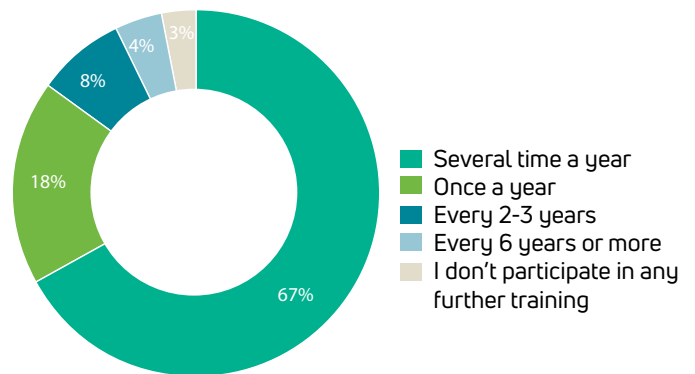


Figure 1: Survey data – frequency of participation in training and development activities

'The black market and lack of new entrants coming from school. The long-term effects of this are still to materialise in full. The industry is not future-proofed at the minute'.



5 <https://ciri.ie/cpd/>
 6 <https://www.earlychildhoodireland.ie/work/>
 7 <https://coru.ie/about-us/what-is-coru/>
 8 https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/pub_national_skills_strategy_2025.pdf
 9 Within this research the term 'hair' includes hairdressing and barbering professionals.

2.0 Recognition for the Industry

A system of recognition would go a long way to addressing the skills shortage crisis jeopardising this industry.

Specifically, a CPD system which identifies those who engage in on-going professional development. As demonstrated by the data, for many professionals CPD is critical to keep up with a rapidly evolving industry and to ensure safe practices to consumers. A CPD programme could address the current skills shortage in several ways, for instance it would recognise those who engage in upskilling. It would also boost morale by demonstrating competence to consumers in addition to ensuring safe practices. A formal framework would also highlight career development pathways and career opportunities, thereby supporting the sector as a valuable career choice.

'I spent 9 months looking for someone. I rang all the colleges, but they just don't have the same numbers coming out. I know several people in the same boat.'

In addition to creating a recognition and reward system, some of the key components of a formal CPD system is that it presents a repository of approved training providers, so that participants are confident that they are getting high quality training. CPD systems are also designed to meet the needs of the majority. Accessibility is improved as the availability of activities is increased to make it convenient for participants to attend. Costs for training activities are also reduced due to increased participation numbers.

Comparing the benefits of a CPD system to some of the concerns raised during this research, it would appear that a sector wide CPD framework is vital to ensure the future of the industry. For instance, within this sector training largely takes place at the weekend or on a Monday, which is generally a scheduled day off. Training that does not meet the expectations of trainees could discourage individuals from participating in further development opportunities. This is realised as a business risk if employees are not up to date with the latest trends and techniques. A second issue emerging from this research relates to the lack of recognition for non-formal methods of learning. Much of the training and development, while not officially mapped to the NFQ framework, is recognised as highly valuable within the industry¹⁰. Non-formal learning activities which include in-salon demonstrations, reading articles, blogs, watching

videos etc. are very popular amongst these professionals and are largely driven by the individuals own motivation to learn. This learning is done outside of business hours, but the benefits are brought into practice within the business. The development of short programmes which confer credit and are mapped to the NFQ as supplemental or special purpose learning is required. A record of the learning event and the business outcomes would increase the intrinsic motivation to learn. It could also inform best practices across the sector, increasing collaboration and resulting in a higher quality of service. Thirdly, the lack of a formal structure which would encourage engagement from stakeholders across the industry, means that there is an increased cost associated with on-going training and development. This is an issue for both employers who pay for their employees to attend and for employees who pay for training from their own pockets. Fourthly, development opportunities are not designed flexibly, in terms of content and location, so that everyone has access. Consequently, a formal CPD system would address many of these issues.

Interview and focus group participants believed that a CPD framework would go a long way to encourage more young people into the profession, and to encourage those who have left the profession to return. It would also provide a mechanism to clearly map career opportunities and raise the professional status of the sector. This would send a clear message that working within this industry was analogous to working in any other sector. Fulfilment and success is dependent on both a professional attitude and a professional aptitude.


It was also felt that the expectations of younger recruits needed to be reset to reduce turnover. Suggestions included professional visits to schools, collaboration with career guidance counsellors and working with education providers to ensure that those considering the sector as a career were clear on the full range of professional skills and competencies required. This survey asked respondents to name some of the perks of their roles and the rewarding aspects of working within this sector were very apparent.

2.1 Name one of the perks of your role?



Figure 2: Survey Data – Perks of working in the Hair and Beauty industry

¹⁰ <https://www.qqi.ie/>



Interview and focus group participants believed that a **CPD framework would go a long way to encourage more young people into the profession**, and to encourage those who have left the profession to return.

3.0 Methodology

BRIEF DESK STUDY



A **brief desk study** was undertaken to determine the current career entry and progression options across the Hair and Beauty sector in Ireland. An investigation of the Hair and Beauty sector in other countries was also conducted.

FOCUS GROUPS



Three **focus groups** were conducted with industry representatives in order to gain insights to the key challenges and opportunities within the sector, and to provide a basis for designing the survey. Two of the focus groups representing stakeholders from across the sector were held in Dublin and one focus group representing stakeholders from hairdressing was conducted in the University of Limerick.

ONLINE SURVEY



An **online survey** was distributed in order to capture the knowledge and views of professionals across the industry. Survey questions were themed around assessing current training/development activities, measuring attitudes towards the implementation of a CPD framework, identifying current challenges and opportunities facing the industry. The survey was designed and distributed using Qualtrics Survey software. IMAGE Skillnet distributed a survey link to potential participants. 314 participants responded to the survey - Hairdressing (213), Beauty Therapy (78) and Barbers (23).

INTERVIEWS



Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 50 industry stakeholders. Twenty-seven interviews were conducted prior to the Covid 19 pandemic and twenty-three interviews were conducted once the salons reopened post-Covid. Participants were sourced through IMAGE Skillnet. An email outlining the purpose of the interview and the nature of participation was sent to each potential participant. Interviews were held at the University of Limerick, at business premises and over the phone. Participants included business owners, managers, employees, training providers and other stakeholders within the sector.

4.0 Examples of Recognition Systems

4.1 National Occupational Standards (NOS) and CPD Recommendations

HABIA (Hair and Beauty Industry Authority) is an independent not-for-profit organisation with overall responsibility for setting standards within the Hair and Beauty sector in the UK¹¹. They are supported by the Government and work closely with all industry stakeholders, including employers, employees, learning providers and awarding bodies. HABIA partner with a Government body, Skills Active along with sector specialists to develop National Occupational Standards (NOS). These form the basis of all recognised Hair and Beauty qualifications. These standards ensure that the individuals working within the industry are fully competent to conduct treatment and deliver a high-quality service to consumers. HABIA have set the required amount of CPD for Hair and Beauty professionals in the UK as 30 hours in any 12-month period for full-time employees. For part-time staff CPD is calculated pro-rata based on a 37-hour week.

In working closely with awarding qualification bodies, expert groups and a variety of industry stakeholders, HABIA ensure that there is a collective voice to meet the needs of the sector. Involving a variety of stakeholders means that skill gaps are quickly identified, and training is developed to fill these gaps. HABIA have set specific criteria for endorsed training providers, which raises the quality of training programmes. They issue certificates and diplomas for training which are industry recognised.

Key Takeaways

- Government supported.
- Provides a unified voice for the Hair and Beauty sector.
- Clarifies qualifications, roles and career development.
- Identifies legitimate training providers.

4.2 CPD in practice - BABTEC CPD Model (individual membership)

BABTAC (British Association of Beauty Therapy and Cosmetology) is a premier membership association and insurance provider for beauty, holistic and sports therapies¹². Rather than wait for UK Government regulation of the sector, they, in partnership with industry stakeholders have developed a self-regulated framework to safe-guard both practitioners and consumers. This is a prudent approach, as it protects the industry and consumers in the short-term and provides good evidence for Government regulation as a logical next step.

Using strict criteria, they accredit and endorse training providers. On completion of a course, participants are issued certificates with the BABTAC logo. This is a highly

valued industry recognised stamp of approval. In order to register for BABTAC endorsed programmes you need to be qualified. Evidence of qualifications must be submitted for approval. This is an important control, as it ensures that individuals with no prior experience or education in the field cannot attend a short accreditation programme and promote themselves as qualified practitioners. BABTAC also provide membership insurance, offer discounts and benefits to members. Insurance is also linked to qualifications and accreditation to ensure competence in service.

How does BABTAC membership work for training and development?

In addition to increasing the quality and availability of training to those within the industry, there are also benefits to education providers for having their programmes accredited. These include use of the BABTAC logo, discounts on hiring training venues, and advertising on web or printed materials. Accredited education providers must pay an annual fee to BABTAC. Accessibility to accredited programmes is increased as students can browse through and register for programmes through links on the BABTAC website. On completion of an approved programme, the education provider submits the attendee names to BABTAC, where they are issued a certificate with the BABTAC logo and awarded CPD points. There is a fee of £22 STG charged for each certificate issued. BABTAC recommend that this fee is built into the cost of the training programme. This streamlines the process, as attendees do not have to pay any additional fees in order to gain a certificate and CPD points. To assure high-quality is maintained, BABTAC randomly spot-check providers. Those who do not meet their criteria are removed from the accredited course provider list.



¹¹ <https://HABIA.org/>

¹² <https://www.BABTAC.com/>

Types of Training offered by BABTAC

Four main types of course are available. Each result in an award and the allocation of CPD points/credits.

Type of Course	Details	Award Examples
Qualification Course (attached to an awarding body)	These courses are part of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QFC) in the UK and can be compared to programmes which are available on the Irish NFQ framework.	Certificate or Diploma from VTCT/ ITEC City & Guilds CIBTAC CIDESCO
Product/Manufacturer Courses	The purpose of this type of training is to promote knowledge and competence with new products and technology. Courses offered by product houses or manufacturers are in this category.	Wella Alfaparf L'Oréal Allocation of CPD credits
CPD Course	The purpose of this type of training is to develop current skills or to become more specialist in a particular area. Training here can be offered via a classroom setting, a demonstration, reading approved material etc.	BABTAC certificate. Allocation of CPD credits
Introductory Courses	This type of course is usually one day and is designed to help gain a basic understanding of new treatments or to advance current skills.	BABTAC certificate of attendance. Allocation of CPD credits

Table 1: Examples of the types of training and development opportunities for Hair and Beauty professionals (Table adapted from BABTAC website¹³)

Learning Mode	Modality	Evidence of Work	CPD Points
Self-learning	Attendance at exhibitions	Photocopy of ticket	1
Self-learning	Reading relevant articles and books	Copy of journal & written evidence of reflective practices explaining how you would use the information you have gained for further development	1 point per hour
Educational Activity	Training seminar/ workshop	Certificate of Attendance	1 point per hour
Educational Activity	Governing body qualification	Certificate	30 credits
Work based	In house training	Certificate of attendance	1 point per hour

Table 2: Types of learning activities, required evidence and CPD points allocation (Adapted from BABTAC website¹⁴)

¹³ <https://www.babtac.com/>
¹⁴ <https://www.BABTAC.com/>



...the CIRI objective is to establish standards of ethics, competence, skills and knowledge in the construction industry.

Key Takeaways

- Industry supported.
- International partnerships.
- Identifies legitimate training providers.
- Boosts professional recognition at an individual level.
- Recognises work-based training.
- Provides a practical CPD framework.
- Holistic approach to professional development.

4.3 Construction Industry Register Ireland (CIRI)

CIRI was set up by the Construction Industry Federation (CIF) in consultation with the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government. Its objective is to establish standards of ethics, competence, skills and knowledge in the construction industry. Registration with CIRI is currently voluntary, although legislation for mandatory registration is in process.

CIRI is an interesting example as it has over 30 categories of registration designed for all construction practitioners including builders and contractors across construction

disciplines (plastering, plumbing carpentry etc.), sub-contractors and other trades which may be engaged by contractors. There are several conditions attached to registration which include providing evidence of qualification or competence, mandatory annual CPD, health and safety requirements, ethical obligations and provision of tax and insurance compliance.

Highlights of CIRI the CPD process

- It recognises that development needs are dependent on the business and the job function. CPD is specifically designed to build on existing core activities, rather than place additional demand on resources.
- CIRI members already engaging in training and upskilling programmes can direct this activity towards the realisation of a structured CIRI CPD plan.
- CPD can be delivered by in-house management, supervisor or craft worker personnel who have the relevant core competencies on the topics to be delivered.

Role	Annual CPD Requirements
Director/Manager	Minimum of 40 hours CPD (50% may be informal)
Supervisor	Minimum of 40 hours CPD (50% may be informal)
Craft Worker	Minimum of 20 hours CPD (50% may be informal)
Operative	Minimum of 10 hours CPD (50% may be informal)

Table 3: Breakdown of CPD requirements by job function – CIRI CPD17

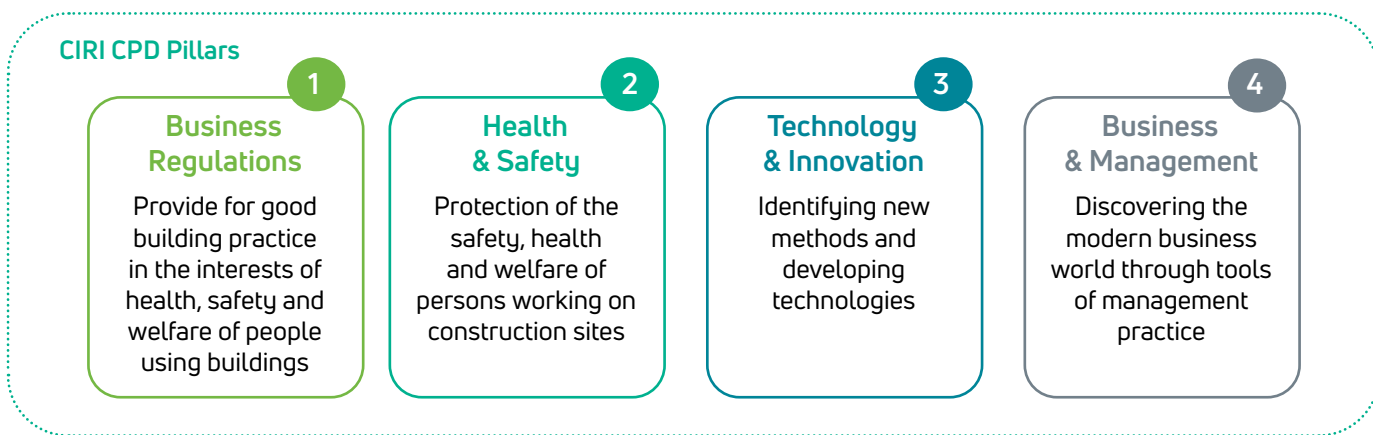


Figure 3: Ciri CPD Pillars (adapted from Ciri website)

Types of Ciri CPD Activity

Learning Mode	Delivery
Structured CPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal courses • Verified toolbox talks • Speaking at verified conferences and CPD events, including online learning
Unstructured CPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning from colleagues on the job • Reading • Reflecting on one’s own work • Activities undertaken outside work which feed back into work

Table 4: Breakdown of CPD requirements by job function – Ciri CPD¹⁵

Ciri CPD Model (customer-centered membership)

The Ciri registration process was developed to support governance and statutory performance compliance. Consequently, the model is customer-centered, which likely reflects in the annual registration fee of €738. As evidenced in the BABTEC CPD model, individual annual membership costs significantly less. Nevertheless, for the purpose of this research, it is worthwhile to consider all approaches. Within the Ciri CPD framework, each organisation is required to plan, record and verify the CPD activities of personnel, and they are required to provide evidence that the training and development activities undertaken address the needs identified. Each Ciri member must develop a staff development plan based on identified company training needs. There is also a requirement for employees to submit structured self-appraisal forms, identifying any knowledge and skills deficits across job functions.

Ciri CPD Monitoring and Auditing

Ciri CPD is monitored through a system of structured audits with penalties for non-compliance. In the short term, Ciri CPD is structured around a paper-based system, administered and applied by each registered member. In the medium term, CPD will be recorded through an online electronic system to enable registered members to electronically record CPD, and to enable Ciri to more effectively monitor and audit compliance.

Key Takeaways

- Supported by Government and statutory law.
- Facilitates CPD across a diverse and multi-level workforce.
- Utilises the knowledge and skills already present in a business.

¹⁵ <https://www.ciri.ie/cpd/>

- Assists business owners to identify skill gaps and plan future needs.
- Boosts professional recognition at an organisational level.
- The business bears the cost of annual registration along with training and development expenses.
- Registration is limited to businesses who are tax compliant and properly insured.
- Ensures that Health and Safety standards are met through regular inspections.

Examples of linking other types of recognition

4.4 Register of Electrical Contractors of Ireland (RECI)

Trade registration or licensing is an important measure to ensure the integrity of a profession and to guarantee a high quality of service. The hair and beauty industry in Ireland is currently unregulated. There are no general licensing requirements and no statutory requirement for professionals to hold specified qualifications. This is a real health and safety concern for the industry as it allows non-qualified individuals to practice. RECI is a good example of how a registration system could be implemented to ensure that the integrity of a profession can be maintained.

Safe Electric hold a register of electrical contractors (RECI) and ensure through audits and inspections that individuals are operating to the relevant national standards and technical rules. The primary objective of this register is to protect the safety interests of customers with respect to electrical installation activities. The provision of an on-line searchable database ensures that consumers can be confident that they are using a contractor who is competent, insured and subject to regular inspection

Registered Electrical Contractors (RECs) must adhere to the rules of registration which include on-going training, inspection and insurance. To qualify for annual membership contractors must submit evidence of insurance and their major electrical qualification. They must also demonstrate that their skills are up to date with the provision on an Electrical Verification and Certificate award. This certificate is valid for 5 years and must be maintained by completing an approved training course through various accredited training providers around Ireland. Safe Electric carry out disciplinary actions where necessary and ensure that contractors on the register have appropriate insurance cover in place.

The Commission for Regulation of Utilities (CRU) maintain statutory responsibility for regulation and policy decisions around electrical safety. They have appointed Safe Electric as the supervisory body for RECI. The CRU is an independent body, which ensures that functions are carried out in a fair, impartial and transparent manner. Given the fragmentation within the Hair and Beauty sector, a system like this would have several benefits. Firstly, the interests of one profession would not be supported over another. Secondly, it would enable consumers to make more informed choices around hair and beauty treatments. Thirdly, registration would provide a mechanism and a process for raising quality of service concerns. Fourthly, it would ensure that professionals are properly qualified and insured to safely carry out the treatments they offer.

Key Takeaways

- Two-tiered approach supports transparency and fairness across professions.
- Boosts professional recognition at an individual level.
- Registration costs are shared by business owners and employees.
- Requires evidence of qualification and insurance.
- CPD targets competence and safe working practices.

4.5 Hair and Barber Council UK

The Hair and Barber Council is Government supported and operates similarly to BABTAC¹⁶. However, their focus is on hairdressers and barbers. One of their initiatives, a voluntary register of qualified hairdressers is very relevant to this research. The register is open to hairdressers and barbers who can demonstrate that they are qualified and have at least two years industry experience. Registered professionals, also known as state registered hairdressers (SRH) confer the right to put the initials SRH after their names. There is also a progression pathway for those with both management and training skills to apply for a master craftsman diploma. This is an interesting initiative to consider given that the majority of participants in this study had at least 15 years industry experience. Therefore, the practice of utilising post nominal initials as a mechanism which recognises those with both industry experience and education should be considered.

Key Takeaways

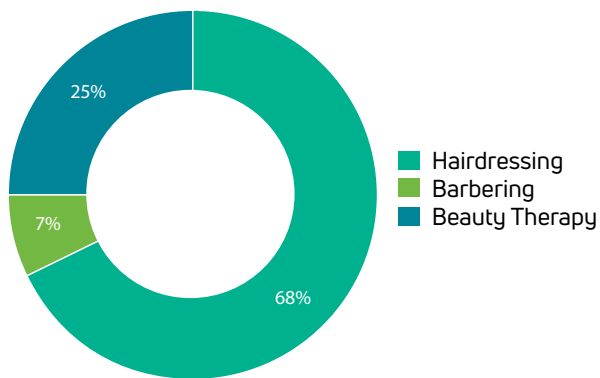
- Provides a mechanism to identify professionals by qualification and experience.

¹⁶ <https://www.haircouncil.org.uk/>

5.0 Research Outcome and Analysis

Profile of Survey Respondents

5.1 Survey Participants

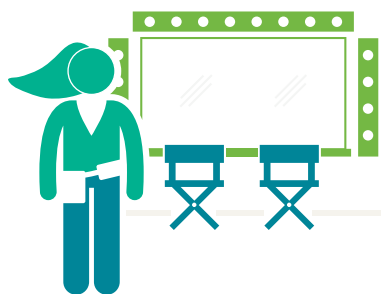


213 worked within **HAIRDRESSING**

78 worked within **BEAUTY THERAPY**

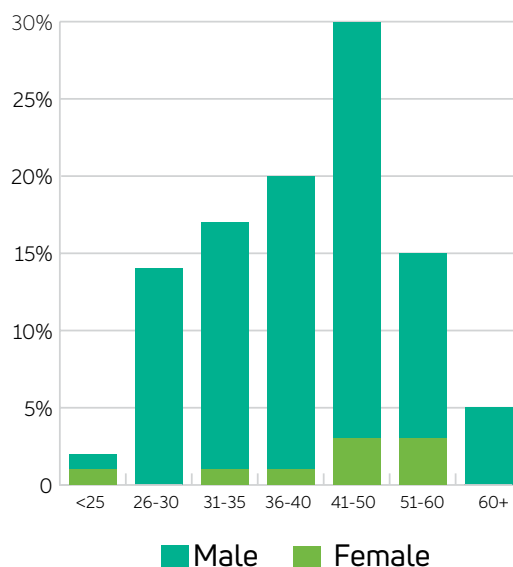
23 worked within **BARBERING**

167 business **MANAGERS OR OWNERS** (118 HAIRDRESSING OR BARBERING, 49 BEAUTY THERAPY)



MAJORITY WERE FEMALE

88% HAD AT LEAST 7 YEARS OF **EXPERIENCE**



How long have you worked in the industry?

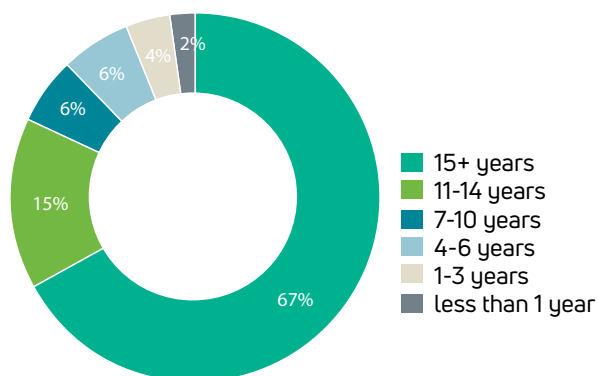


Figure 4: Profile of survey respondents

5.2 Survey Participants

Profession	Chair Renting in a Salon	Franchise Business	Freelance/ Mobile	One of a Group or Chain of Salons	Single Salon Business	Spa
Hairdressing	2%	1%	5%	13%	79%	
Barbering	5%	5%	5%	16%	69%	
Beauty Therapy	1%	3%	13%	7%	60%	16%

Table 5: Survey respondents – types of business (n = 314)

5.3 Interview and Focus Group Participants

A total of fifty interviews and three focus groups were conducted across the sector. The majority of participants had in excess of fifteen years’ experience and included business owners, managers, employees and education providers. The research also sought the opinion of an insurance agency to assess whether a CPD framework would be beneficial in terms of reduced insurance costs. This agency was open to discussing a partnership once the planning phase began.

5.4 Do you hold a membership with any professional organisation?

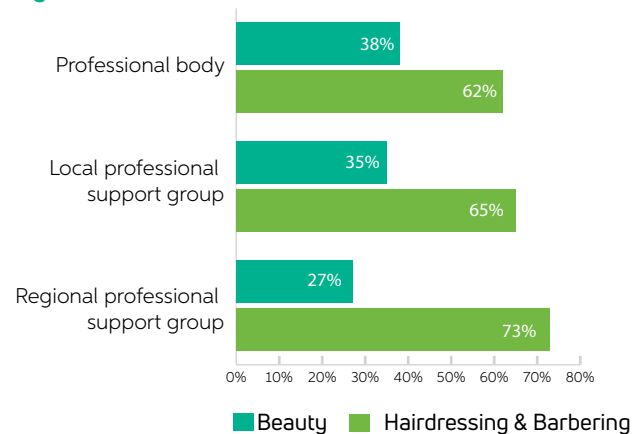


Figure 5: Survey data – Membership with professional organisations (n = 236, hairdressing and barbering; n = 78, beauty therapy)

5.5 Drivers of Change within the Industry

Drivers of Change and attitudes towards change

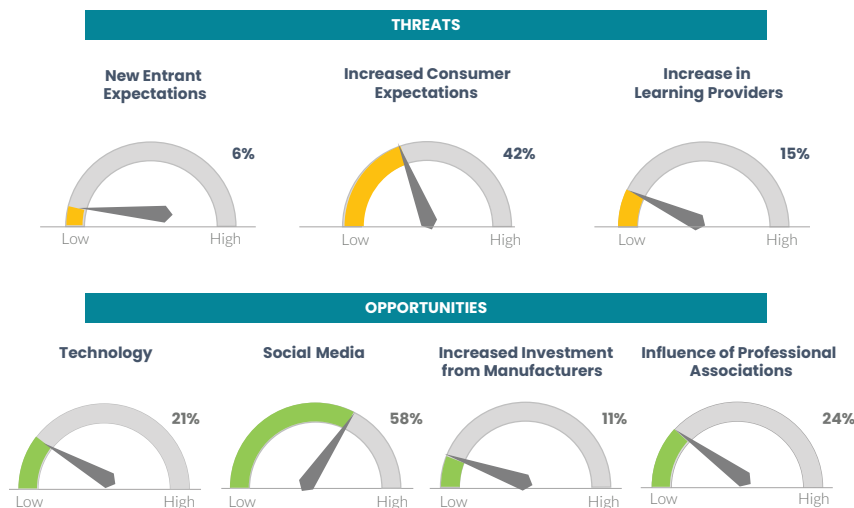


Figure 6: Drivers of Change (Survey Responses) with coloured sentiment interpretation from Interview and Focus Group Data (n = 314). Yellow = threat, Green = opportunity.

This section looks at the drivers of change within the Hair and Beauty industry. The percentage of participants who responded to each driver of change is sourced from the survey data. The sentiment around these drivers was gained from interview and focus group data. Green indicates an opportunity for the sector whereas yellow indicates a threat.

Social Media

The pre-Covid survey results found that over half of the survey respondents (58%) viewed Social Media as a significant driver of change. Sentiment towards this, gained from the interview and focus group data was positive. The impact of Social Media on the industry has been both profound and rapid, particularly for its value in advertising, developing communities of practice and supporting non-formal learning. Post -Covid interview data found that Social Media served as a lifeline to business owners during the lockdown, where activity in these types of activities dramatically increased.

Nevertheless, a down-side to Social Media was the opinion that a negative review could have harmful effects on a business, or worse still, a team member if the review was directed at an individual. A number of interview participants had to upskill in order to engage with the full business benefits of Social Media. This type of training was viewed as very beneficial. In light of the Covid 19 pandemic restrictions, the influence of Social Media in supporting businesses functions is now viewed as a critical component within a CPD a framework

Increased Consumer Expectations

Increased consumer expectations was viewed as a driver of change by 42% of respondents. The sentiment attached to this driver was largely negative. Social Media was identified as creating unrealistic client expectations. Several issues were identified here. Firstly, clients wish to recreate a look from a picture which has been airbrushed or otherwise modified. Secondly, a client may not have the right type of hair, skin, features, an underlying health condition or a host of other factors which need professional consideration. For this reason, inclusion of customer service and consultation training opportunities were recommended as an important part of a CPD framework. This would aid a collaborative discussion where professionals could highlight limitations and work with the client to create a look that can be achieved.

Influence of Professional Associations

Almost one quarter (24%) of survey respondents indicated that the influence of professional associations was a driver of change for the industry. The sentiment here was very positive. Membership in professional associations is popular, particularly for hairdressing professionals. Figure 4 shows that almost three quarters (73%) of hairdressers and barbers are members of a regional professional support

group. Well over half are members of a local professional support group (65%) or a professional body (62%). For beauty therapists, just over one quarter (27%) were members of a regional professional support group, over a third (35%) were members of a local professional support group and 38% were members of a professional body.

Interview data adds some context to these figures. In the past, the Irish Beauty Professionals Association (IBPA) and the Society of Applied Dermatology were the representative groups for the Beauty industry. However, since their dissolution several years ago, these professionals have had no representative body. That is, until the founding of HABIC (Hair and Beauty Industry Confederation of Ireland) in 2019, which is a new national organisation designed to support and enhance the entire sector. Post Covid interviews revealed that beauty professionals were particularly excited about this new organisation, who in addition to IMAGE Skillnet worked tirelessly with the sector during the lockdown.

The Covid 19 pandemic has united the sector, with the help and guidance of these professional organisations. A trusting bond has been formed and the pathway has been laid for collaboration on the development of a CPD framework. Professional bodies are integral to any profession. In addition to providing a unified voice, they help to reduce the cost of training and negotiate with the Government and other agencies on behalf of a group. Other industry representatives include the Irish Hairdressers Federation, Irish Hairdressers Council, Synergy Hairdressing Group, Barbers Society of Ireland, Irish Massage Therapists Association, Irish Spa Association and the Federation of Irish Complementary Therapy Associations. It was recommended that a steering committee with representatives from each of these organisations was necessary for the successful development of a CPD framework.

Technology

A fifth of survey respondents (21%) indicated that technology was a main driver of change within the industry and the sentiment attached was very positive. The industry is evolving at a rapid pace, particularly in respect of new technologies and treatments. This evolution has generated a real sense of excitement. For professional skills to remain current and sought after, it was recommended that an annual requirement for training in new technologies and treatments should be included in a CPD framework. The inclusion of requirements for refresher training was also requested. This would point to a need for a CPD system which differentiates between different types of learning.

The Covid 19 pandemic has contributed to a positive upsurge in the use of technology across business activities. For many it has resulted in the development of a new business model. Some of new activities undertaken included.

- An increase in the number of online courses to upskill or refresh knowledge. Technical, business and sanitation courses were developed online. Participants found this modality both engaging and informative. Consequently, the use of technology to fill learning gaps is predicted to present exciting new opportunities for the industry.
- More collaboration with other business owners which created a sense of community.
- The development of online videos to help clients with daily hair and skincare needs.
- Collaboration and support from professional organisations such as IMAGE Skillnet and HABIC.

A CPD framework needs to consider how the Covid pandemic has impacted the industry and how it can be utilised to support a new business model. While many technical programmes will require a practical classroom environment, others which can be taught online should be developed. This research found that the top three barriers to training in pre-Covid times were location/distance, cost and time. Post-Covid, these are issues which can be addressed with the use of technology. The addition of a CPD framework to accrue points for this type of training would help to keep professionals motivated and open to these new opportunities.



Increase in Learning Providers

There has been a significant increase in learning providers within the Hair and Beauty sector, which 15% of respondents identified as a driver of change within the industry. The sentiment around this was largely negative. A lack of regulation coupled with the absence of a formal CPD framework to assess providers were considered as contributing to skill gaps, skill shortages, and a negative opinion of the industry.

For instance, a vast amount of qualification and accreditation programmes exist for Hair and Beauty professionals. Qualifications can be gained by completing a QQI, VTEC/ITEC, CIBTAC, CIDESCO or City & Guilds programme through a private or public education provider. Many of these qualifications are mapped on the Irish NFQ Education framework. This signals that an individual is fit for a specific function but requires practical experience in order to develop their knowledge and skills. Accreditation programmes are of shorter duration and compliment a qualification as it allows individuals to fine tune current skills or upskill to add new treatments to their portfolio.

The absence of regulation is creating problems here, as individuals with no prior qualification or experience are using accreditation programmes to promote themselves as competent practitioners. This is viewed as a massive health and safety issue; it is driving up insurance costs for legitimate businesses and it damages the professional image of the industry. Regulation would result in the development of pre-requisites for certain courses. This would help to increase health and safety standards as individuals would be required to provide evidence of competence prior to enrolment. The development of a CPD framework would confer further benefits. For instance, annual CPD could be a requirement for instructors to ensure that they are up to date on the latest techniques. Additionally, more professionals would be encouraged to upskill or refresh their skills with higher quality programmes which were attached to CPD credit. Consequently, interview participants felt that a two-pronged approach was required to successfully tackle this issue.

Increased Investment from Manufacturers

Increased investment from manufacturers was viewed as a driver of change by 11% of survey respondents and the sentiment around this was largely positive. Several major brands offer training and qualifications which are globally recognised as an industry standard. These programmes adopt a tiered approach, facilitating development at entry, mid and master career levels. All interview participants regularly participated in manufacturer or brand training, which is of very high quality. However, it was also suggested that this type of training could be improved with the development of programmes which conferred foundational

'New graduates have good technical skills but they don't have business skills to back them up'



New entrant expectations were identified by 6% of survey respondents as a driver of change within the industry, with the sentiment attached largely negative.

scientific knowledge as a mandatory pre-requisite. In fact, given the shift towards modular qualifications, this is viewed as an emerging requirement across the sector. Consequently, interview participants proposed that a programme in anatomical and physiological theory should be a pre-requisite to these programmes. For beauty therapy professionals engaging in advanced services such as laser or micro-needling additional mandatory programmes covering the fundamentals of these technologies was proposed. This would ensure that treatments and recommendations were based on scientific evidence. It would also contribute to safer practices, where contraindications and benefits are fully explored during the client consultation process.

The wider benefits of this approach would be in the provision of a mechanism to boost professional recognition and perhaps facilitate negotiations with insurance providers. There were further suggestions that manufacturers could also get involved in the development of a digital badge system. Several participants favoured a badge for the foundational pre-requisite programmes. This is certainly an area which warrants investigation for the additional benefits it would confer. For instance, it would overcome any unintended bias, where badges were not specific to one manufacturer or brand, but to the underlying knowledge and skills. Secondly, it would recognise professionals with advanced skills. Consequently, it was recommended that manufacturers and insurance agencies should be included as stakeholders in the development of a CPD framework.

New Entrant Expectations

New entrant expectations were identified by 6% of survey respondents as a driver of change within the industry, with the sentiment attached largely negative. Inconsistencies in the quality of initial training lack of professional ethics and career guidance in schools were identified as the contributing factors. Regulation of the industry was proposed to tackle the training issues. This would ensure that course content and outcomes were evaluated. The suggestions to host 'a day in the life' talks in schools would certainly help here. This would also facilitate more informed decision making in school leavers. Those considering a career in the sector would have a better understanding of the role requirements and the professional standards. Consequently, participants felt that these types of activities needed to be built into a CPD framework.

5.6 Manager Views on Greatest Skill Gaps

What are the greatest skill gaps within your business?

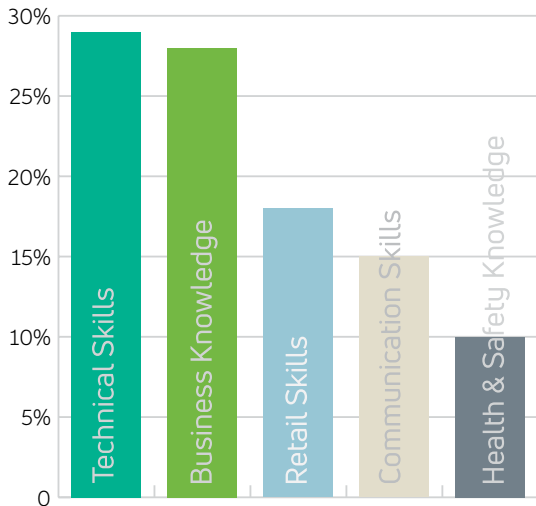


Figure 7: Survey Data – Manager views on greatest skill gaps within their business (n = 167)

Of the 167 business owners and managers who responded to the survey, over a quarter identified both technical skills (29%) and business knowledge (28%) as the greatest skill gaps within their business. The rapid evolution of the industry in terms of new techniques and products was the main reason attributed to technical skills gaps for experienced professionals. While time and money were issues, all interview participants had developed methods to ensure that staff had the necessary skills to provide a high level of service.

Technical Skills

For graduates, inadequate training, misguided expectations and lack of motivation were amongst the contributing factors for the skills gaps. Inconsistencies in the level of training received was common across all three professions. There were also concerns regarding the increase in short accreditation programmes and the new modular approach to qualifications in Beauty Therapy. It was felt that in addition to adopting a piecemeal approach to technical skills, these shorter programmes also scale back on anatomical and physiological theory. Accordingly, some argue that there is a significant knowledge gap which should be filled with CPD.

It was suggested that foundational scientific programmes which confer essential knowledge should be developed. These programmes should be mapped to the NFQ and a mandatory requirement across the entire sector. Certainly, this approach should be considered as a mechanism to



boost professional recognition. For instance, knowledge has evolved to reflect that many hair and skin problems could be as a result of diet, lifestyle, hormones or genetics. These are topics routinely explored by professionals during the consultation process. It demonstrates the holistic approach to services, where nowadays professionals are not just treating an issue but exploring contributory factors and offering a prescriptive rather than a quick fix.

The development of a foundational scientific course, as a mandatory prerequisite to brand training would boost professional standards across the sector and facilitate the flexibility of modular learning. Given the complexity of this subject area and the transformative nature of the industry, graduates of the Beauty Therapy Diploma programme would also benefit from this type of regulation to refresh their knowledge.

Business Knowledge

Different types of business knowledge are required within this profession. The nature of the industry means that qualified professionals have a lot of autonomy within their roles. For salon workers, there is a necessity to manage your own column. This requires the ability to provide a safe and hygienic environment, attract and retain clients, schedule appointments, maintain records, provide efficient treatments, ensure availability of stock, investigate and upskill on new trends, and services along with keeping skills up to date with seasonal treatments. Consequently,

‘Creatively the industry is absolutely thriving but the business part is struggling’.



in addition to technical skills and knowledge, good organisational, communication and planning skills are essential. An individual who is not skilled in any of these areas can significantly impact the profit margins.

Another type of business knowledge is necessary for those seeking to progress to supervisory or management roles. This requires the ability to drive staff autonomy, measure and manage performance, schedule staff, set targets, handle payroll, manage conflict, demonstrate leadership, and develop a marketing strategy to improve profit. However, this research found that many individuals at a senior level are promoted to management roles on the grounds of tenure or a high level of efficiency within the salon. This strategy does not take account of the steep learning curve which is involved when professionals move from managing their own column to managing a team or a salon.

However, there is a lack of bespoke business and leadership training programmes which are required to successfully transition from an employee to a managerial role. General business programmes were viewed as time consuming and not specifically relevant with regards to understanding the skillset required for this sector. The Management Development Unit at the University of Limerick is working

with the sector on this issue and offers a bespoke level 7 certificate programme in business management. More development opportunities which target the business skillset for both employees and managers are required in order to ensure competitiveness. A successful CPD framework needs to consider how essential business knowledge across functions differs and how these individual learning needs can be met.

Retail skills

Retail skills were viewed by 18% of managers as a skills gap. Interview and focus group data indicated that retail skills were not required for the sole purpose of increasing revenue. Likewise, selling product for commission was not a common practice amongst the salons. The nature of providing services has evolved dramatically where treatments have become prescriptive. The role of the professional is to take the personal attributes and lifestyle of the client into consideration when recommending a style or treatment. Resultantly, training opportunities in anatomy and physiology, diet/ nutrition and product knowledge were recommended for inclusion in a CPD framework.

Repositioning the business post Covid 19

The Covid 19 pandemic has highlighted the value of this sector to society. The emotional and psychological significance of these services in crafting a personal and social identity has been emphasized. There is recognition that business models need to change, for continued service and revenue. In order to meet the needs of clients a more efficient approach is required. Value added services is a new business model which integrates multiple treatments, treatment programmes and home care packages. With the uncertainty around the pandemic, opportunities within this new model need to be explored and operationalised. Consequently, training in strategic retail skills is an immediate requirement within a CPD framework.

Communication Skills

One in four managers (15%) and business owners who completed the survey indicated communication as a skills gap. Communication skills are a growing concern, so there were suggestions for developing customer service skills as a training pillar within a CPD framework. This was viewed as important not just in terms of etiquette amongst the younger generation, but also given the nature of the client practitioner relationship. Clients tend to form bonds with the professional, which some attributed to the level of physical touch involved in a service. Conversations often get quite emotional and deep, where clients reveal a lot about their personal lives. Certainly, many believed that this was a perk of role, and demonstrated a high level of trust. However, the lack of training and guidance in this area means that less experienced professionals have trouble separating the personal relationship from the professional relationship.

This often leads to high levels of stress and burnout.

Communication skills were also seen as a crucial part of the role in terms of the evolution of the profession and the depth of consultation involved. Consultation is no longer 'meet and greet' but draws on the knowledge and skills of the professional. Many felt that there was an opportunity to educate the client on the science behind the treatment in a relatable manner. This results in clients leaving the salon feeling like they got an education in addition to a new look. Communication is viewed as an important area which supports client loyalty and retention. Consequently, participants felt that there was a need to include communication skills within a CPD framework. Opportunities should include professional service, self-care strategies and information delivery strategies.

'Clients look for information from you. That's why you need to keep upskilling yourself. People are more educated and you are more prescriptive now'

Health and Safety

Health and Safety was viewed by 10% of managers as a skills gap. Given that the survey was completed pre Covid 19, the concern surrounding this gap is likely much higher. The biggest concerns here relate to the fact that in addition to non-regulation of the industry, there are no documented best practices to guide salons in this area. The National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) have recently published best practices for beauty therapy (EN 17226), which can be purchased from their website¹⁷. There is also work underway on best practice for hairdressing and barbering(ISO TC 228)¹⁸. However, this is grouped with best practice for Tourism and related services, so the value of this document to the hair industry, remains to be seen. Nevertheless, as stated by the NSAI, these are simply best practices and there is no obligation on a business to follow them.

Other issues which arose around health and safety involved personal well-being. Physical strain such as back pain, neck pain, arm pain and spending long periods of time on your feet were familiar to interview respondents. Nutrition was also cited as a concern; were it is common practice to skip lunch and breaks on busy days. Emotional and psychological strain was also reported. Given the unique bond between client and professional, often a trip to the salon does not just confer aesthetic benefits to clients, but

also some spiritual benefits. Yet there is very little in terms of guidance or support for these issues, which in other settings would be a primary concern for employers. Many individuals had taken it upon themselves to seek out coping strategies. As Covid restrictions continue, the emotional and psychological well-being of staff and clients is of primary concern. Consequently, it was proposed that a Health and Safety pillar with the inclusion of personal well-being should be included in a CPD framework.

Post Covid 19 Health and Safety

Interviews conducted following the Covid lockdown found that salon sanitation was much less of an issue. Many salon owners found that they were already operating under the guideline's issued by the government. Much of the stress and strain during this period related to financial burden and meeting Government social distancing guidelines to ensure client and staff safety.

IMAGE Skillnet recently launched a programme which recognises salons who are Covid compliant. Salon owners register for an inspection to receive a sticker indicating health compliance at the business entry point. The initiative received very favourable feedback. A similar approach is required to identify salons who engage with CPD.

5.7 Do you think that a CPD system that rewards points for training and development would address these gaps?

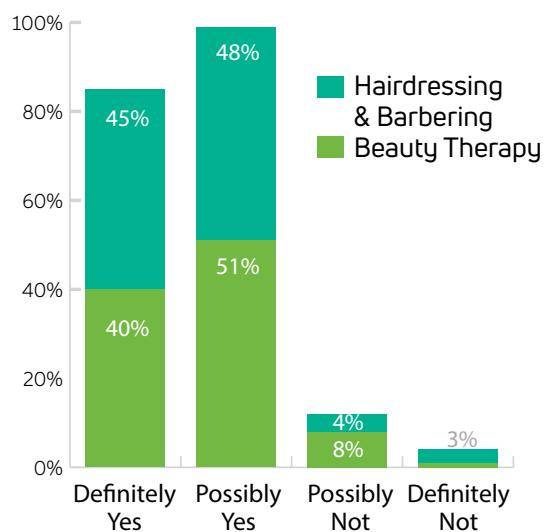


Figure 8: Survey Data – Manager and business owner views on the likelihood of a CPD framework addressing the skill gaps (n = 167)

17 <https://www.nsai.ie/standards>

18 <https://www.iso.org/committee/375396.html>

Regarding the question of whether the skill gaps could be addressed with a CPD system there was an overwhelmingly positive response. Of the 118 hairdressing and barbering business leaders, 91% felt that it would definitely or possibly address the gaps with just 4% responding probably not and 1% definitely not. Of the forty-nine beauty therapy business leaders, 93% felt that a CPD system would definitely or possibly address the gaps, 8% felt that it would probably not and 3% responded definitely not.

From the interview and focus group conversations, we can establish some context around this data. Discussions identified that in addition to cost, time and location, a major contributing cause for skill gaps was attributed to the rapid evolution of the industry in terms of technology, techniques and professional service. Much of the current development opportunities are focused on a tangible skillset, however, with the evolution of the industry comes evolution of a more intangible skillset. For instance, the ability to combine knowledge with the skill of consultation, communication and preservation of the professionals physical, emotional and psychological well-being. Certainly, there were many benefits attributed to on-going training and development. One in five respondents reported increased confidence with skills (21%), increased job satisfaction (19%) and increased productivity (19%). Enhanced professional recognition was also a positive outcome for one in four respondents (15%) and 11% associated financial reward with upskilling. Lifestyle, health and well-being gains was a positive outcome of just 8% of survey respondents. Interview and focus group data confirmed that the physical, emotional and psychological burden associated with these professions was on the increase, due to increased consumer expectations and a more holistic approach to professional service. However, there is not a lot of emphasis on these types of development opportunities. A CPD framework which includes mechanisms to support the intangible skillset of this profession would address many of these skill gaps.

A CPD framework which includes mechanisms to support the intangible skillset of this profession would address many of these skill gaps.

5.8 How does on-going training and development personally benefit you?

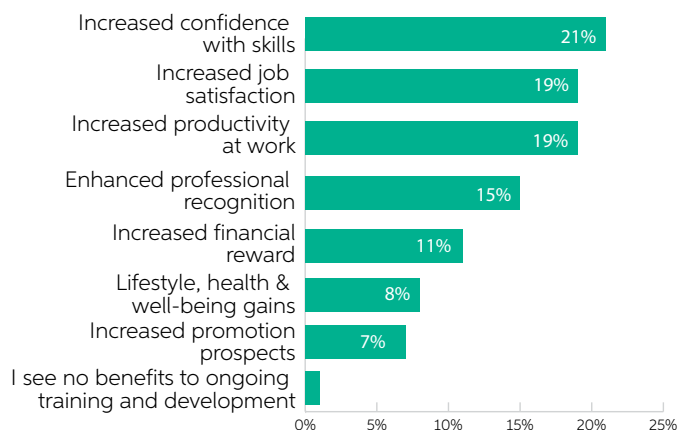
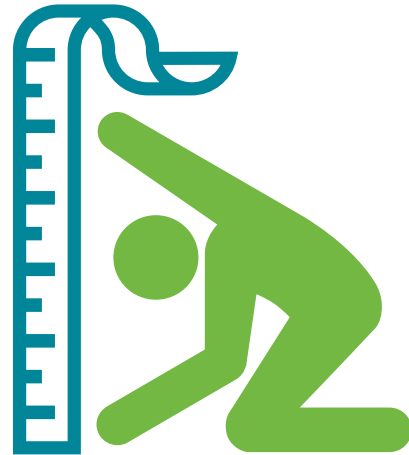
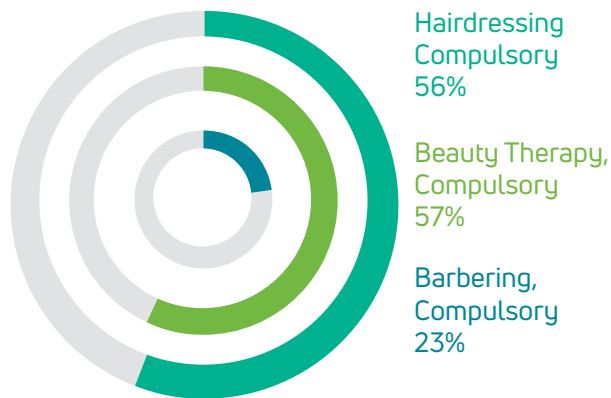


Figure 9: Survey Data - Personal benefits of engagement with on-going CPD (n = 314)

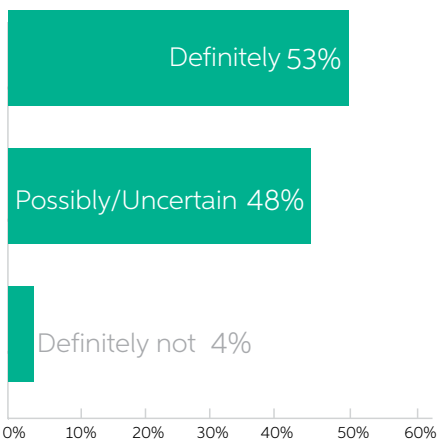


5.9 Measuring Opinion on CPD

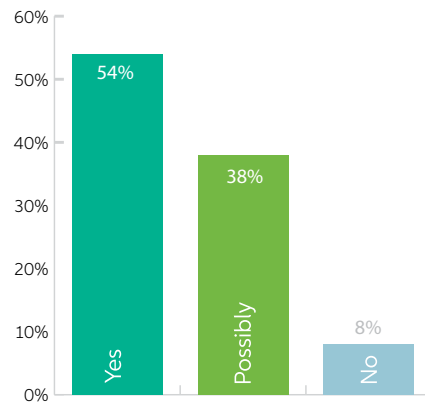
Is CPD optional or compulsory in your workplace?



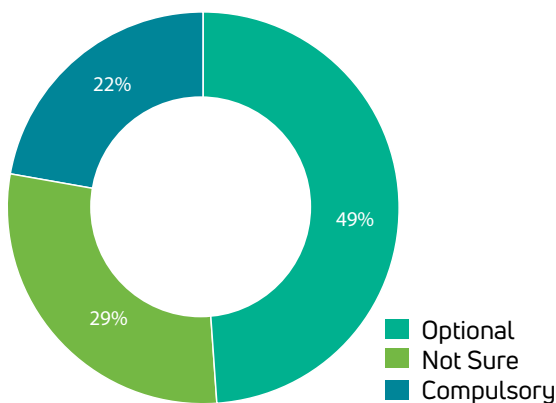
How likely would you be to register and collect points at relevant CPD training events?



Does the sector require an integrated recognition system with awards points and records participation in training and development?



Should employee registration with a points system be compulsory or optional?



Would you be willing to pay a small annual subscription fee to an organization to manage your CPD points/credits?

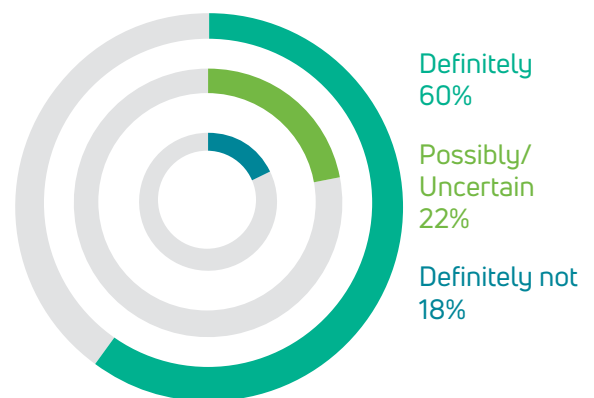


Figure 10: Survey Data – Measuring opinions towards the implementation of a sector-wide CPD framework (n = 314) addressing the skill gaps (n = 167)

5.10 CPD Opinions

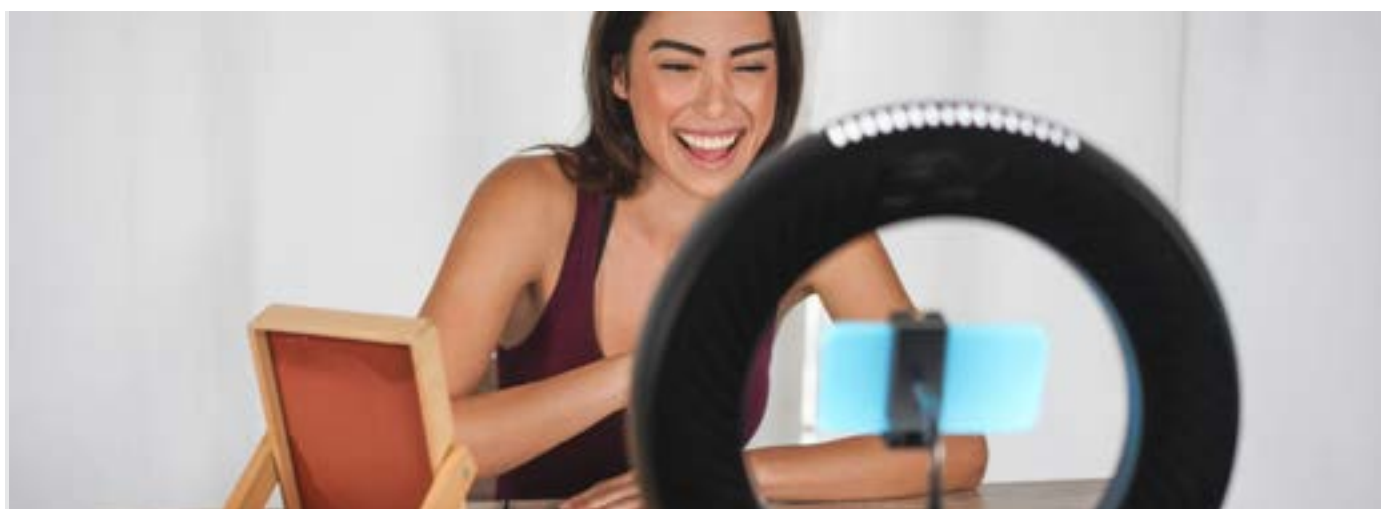
Survey data found that currently CPD is compulsory for over half of the hairdressing (56%) and beauty professionals (57%) and almost one quarter of barbering professionals (23%). Regarding the development of a CPD system which recognises and awards points, just over one quarter of respondents (26%) agreed that it was a requirement, three quarters were unsure (74%) and 18% felt that this system was definitely not required. Regarding registration with a system, almost half of the respondents (49%) felt that it should be optional. Interview participants had mixed views on this point. Some felt that a voluntary system was the only workable solution given the fragmentation of the industry. Others felt that mandatory registration was necessary for

health and safety. Regarding collecting points at relevant training events, over half the participants indicated that they would definitely participate, 43% indicated that they would possibly participate and just 4% indicated that they would not participate in a points collection system. When asked if they were willing to pay a small fee for such a system, over one fifth of participants indicated that they would (22%), less than one fifth indicated that they would not (18%) and the remaining 60% indicated that they were unsure. Interview and focus group participants felt that there would be widespread participation with the system once the details and benefits were communicated.

Opinions on a CPD framework gained from interview and focus group data

Support for CPD Framework (verbatim)	Concerns about CPD Framework (verbatim)
People are spending thousands on upskilling and it's upsetting that they are not recognised.	Anyone who is successful in the industry is already involved in training and development. They don't need a system to build a reputation
A CPD framework could be used to show that there are better standards within the industry as there is more education and knowledge. A culture is building.	It would only work if there was buy-in from across the sector and I'm not sure how to get this. If we don't get the majority and the key people, then you are at nothing with this.
Reading, YouTube, videos, guided pdfs and demos could all be included. It would motivate you to do more too. It's easy to do the same thing over and over again so if you have the mind to use different sources it would motivate you.	It would have to be generic rather than specific training as in practice you deal with a lot of different brands. I don't know how that could work.
This type of system would be transformative for the industry.	The black market is killing us and a points system won't change this.
We have skill gaps because there is no system of recognition. So, people aren't educating themselves	You'll have the same people upskilling and developing themselves and then the same people who just won't bother.

Table 6: Interview data – participant views on the impact of a CPD framework on boosting recognition of the industry



5.11 Training and Development – Past and Future

What type of training and development activities have you engaged in over the past 12 months?

What types of training activity have you participated in during the last 12 months?	Hairdressing & Barbering	Beauty Therapy
Practical course/workshop	61%	69%
Read industry related blogs/online content	56%	53%
In-house practical demonstration/workshop	52%	40%
Read Industry related printed material	37%	50%
Professional Conference	31%	42%
Manufacturer training	27%	36%
Health and Safety well-being training/event training/event	16%	37%
Health and Safety regulation training/event	15%	23%

Table 7: Survey Data – the types of training activity undertaken by individuals in the past 12 months (n = 314)

The research asked participants about the types of training they had engaged in over the past 12 months. It is clear from this data that engagement with continuous professional development is integral to professional service. The top three activities across professions included practical courses/workshops, online blog/web content and in-house practical demonstrations/workshops. There were also some differences observed between professions. For instance, half of the beauty therapy respondents (50%) had read industry related printed material in comparison to 37% of hair professionals. Additionally, 42% of beauty therapists had attended professional conferences in comparison to 31% of hair professionals. A surprising finding relates to

the fact that well-being, health and safety events had the lowest participation rates across professions. Interview participants attributed this to a general lack of availability for these types of programmes.

For several salons, in-house practical demonstrations were carried out on a bi-weekly or monthly basis, where it was common practice to close the salon on a weekday afternoon to facilitate this. Others facilitated training several evenings a month or on Mondays when the salon was closed to the public

What type of training and development activities would you like to engage in over the next 12 months?

What types of training activity would you like to participate in over the next 12 months?	Hairdressing & Barbering	Beauty Therapy
Attend a practical workshop/course	61%	23%
In-house practical demonstration	49%	36%
Attend a professional conference	46%	37%
Attend a health and well-being event	42%	42%
Read industry related blogs/online material	36%	50%
Attend manufacturer training	34%	69%
Health and Safety regulation training/ event	31%	40%
Read industry related printed material	29%	53%

Table 8: The types of training activity which individuals would like to engage with over the next 12 months (n = 314)

The research also asked participants about the types of training and development opportunities which they would like to engage with over the next 12 months. An important observation relates to the fact that well-being events were recognised as a growing necessity across the sector (42%). This is likely due to the fact that roles are becoming increasingly complex. There was also variance observed within the responses. For hair professionals, practical workshops/courses (61%), in-house practical demonstrations (49%) and professional conferences (46%), were amongst the top three desired development opportunities. In contrast for beauty therapists, there is quite a large disperse between the learning opportunities undertaken in the last twelve months and in those desired. For instance, manufacturer training topped the list (69%), followed by industry related printed (53%) and online material (50%).

For a CPD framework to be successful, it is important that the differences in required training and development

opportunities within the sector are recognised and facilitated.

5.12 Moving towards new methods of recognition

Do you like to receive a certificate for training events?

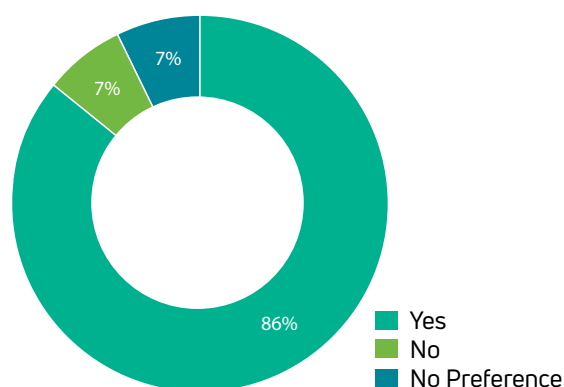


Figure 11: Survey data – Preference for receiving a certificate (n = 314)

A CPD framework needs to consider how certificates are issued and what skills, competencies or knowledge they are recognising. On-going training and development are

‘For all these skills that you have, if you got a badge or an emblem that you could display. It would give confidence to professionals.’

fundamental to success in this profession. Many of the current learning activities result in practical and tangible outcomes, which are highly valued within the industry. However, much of this training is not mapped to the NFQ framework and often result in a certificate of attendance rather than a major award¹⁹. These certificates are largely paper-based, and given the high engagement with learning activities, they have become de-valued by many and stored away in a filing cabinet. Within this industry it is common practice to re-visit training programmes in order to refresh skills. This is particularly important for seasonal treatments or advanced treatments which develop rapidly. Participants who attend programmes on this basis receive no acknowledgement for their time and effort as the certificate of attendance is often only issued for first time attendees. A CPD system needs to acknowledge those who actively work to keep their skills up to date and build recognition into the framework.

There is a clear need to formally acknowledge industry-recognised training within a CPD framework. The preferred method going forward would ideally involve digital certificates of attendance for industry recognised training and minor awards, and a digital badge system for major awards. This type of a system would enable individuals to upload certificates for CPD credit. Digital badges could be displayed on websites and Social Media, which would boost professional recognition and motivate individuals to participate in learning opportunities.

'Accreditation will be very difficult to get in the short term. The value of badges could be seen here. With buy-in from the industry it could be a way to self-regulate'.

Digital Badges

The overwhelming preference was to receive a certificate for participation in training and development (86%). However, there were concerns expressed with the current method of receiving recognition. Firstly, much of the existing CPD opportunities are not formally accredited but are held in high esteem within the industry. Currently, paper-based certificates of attendance are the primary mechanism for recognition. A validated and standardised digital badge system which recognises competency outcomes would boost recognition as achievements could be shared online. A collaboration between UCC and Taste for Success Skillnet successfully explored the opportunity to develop digital badge credentials for non-accredited programmes²⁰. Given

the ongoing relationship between Skillnet Ireland, SOLAS and the Management Development Unit at the University of Limerick, a similar initiative should be investigated.

Micro credentials

Micro credentials are an emerging trend to supplement qualifications. They differ from digital badges as they confer academic credit. To earn a micro-credential, a certain number of activities, assessments, or projects related to a specific topic can be completed online. You then submit your work in order to earn the credential which confers the academic credit. The key feature of micro credentials is that they are developed by a University or other third level institute in collaboration with an industry. This ensures that the qualification meets industry-specific needs. These mini qualifications were developed to enhance specific skills and facilitate career progression. The flexibility that they offer means that they could be used for industry recognised skills or to facilitate access to third level education. This makes them a viable option for the Hair and Beauty sector to explore.

Post Nominal letters

Within this profession, a vast amount of training and development takes place within the salon and is therefore experiential. For all professions, practical experience was highlighted as being crucial to both career progression and gaining expertise. However, under the current hairdressing system, a graduate is often perceived as having more expertise than the individual who has several years' experience, and a large stack of industry recognised certificates. For this reason, a CPD framework needs to consider how post nominal letters can be utilised to recognise the more experienced professionals. This would increase opportunities for both career progression and remuneration. The system developed by the Hair and Barber Council was discussed during the interviews and there was consensus that a similar sector wide system should be utilised within a CPD framework to promote a fair system of recognition.

'A girl coming out of college has an identical badge to mine and I have 40 years' experience. That's not right. Within the industry there should be grades'

¹⁹ <https://nfq.qqi.ie/>

²⁰ <https://www.skillnetireland.ie/publication/developing-new-learning-technologies-taste-4-success-skillnet/>

5.13 Investigating Experience of current Training and Development

How could training and development opportunities be improved?

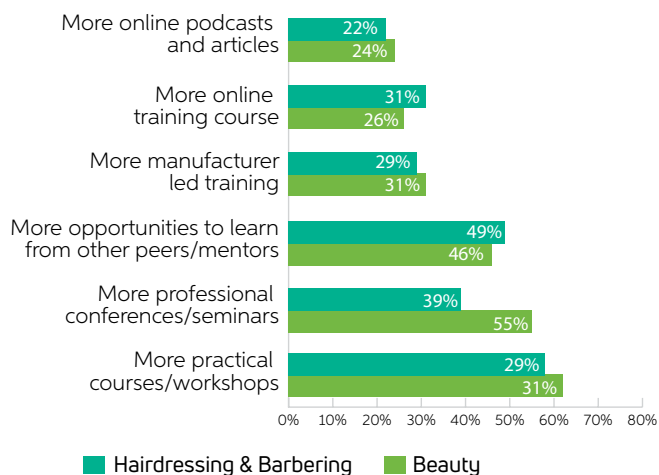


Figure 12: Survey data – opinions on how training and development opportunities could be improved (n = 236, hairdressing and barbering; n = 78, beauty therapy)

For a CPD framework to be successful a bottom-up approach is required to ensure that it meets the needs of professionals across the sector. There were similarities, but also some key differences in the type of training activities desired within Hair and Beauty. For instance, regarding similarities, for 62% of beauty professionals and 58% of hair professionals, practical courses and workshops are viewed as the most valuable in terms of skill development. More opportunities to learn from peers is desired by almost half of the survey respondents, (49% within hairdressing and barbering and 46% of the beauty therapists). More manufacturer led training is also important to almost one third of the respondents and online podcasts and articles is desired by over one fifth hairdressers/barbers (22%) and almost a quarter of beauty professionals (24%). A difference within this group was the fact that a greater number of beauty professionals (55%) expressed a desire for more professional conferences and seminars, in comparison to those within hairdressing and barbering (39%). Regarding on-line training courses, more opportunities for this type of activity was requested by almost a third of the hair professionals (31%) and over one quarter (26%) of beauty professionals. This data emphasises that for a sector wide CPD framework to be successful, the distinctions in desired training methods needs to be considered.

5.14 Barriers to Training and Development

What are the main barriers to training and development?



Figure 13: Survey data – barriers to training and development experienced by individuals (n = 314)

Given that training and development is fundamental to these roles, it was surprising that only 5% experienced no participation barriers. Three inter-linked themes emerged in response to the training and development barriers experienced. Over half of the survey respondents (55%) cited location and distance, almost half of the respondents cited cost (48%) and over a third (33%) identified lack of time as a barrier. Discussion during the interviews and focus groups adds some context to these responses. Several participants expressed that many of the training and development opportunities took place in Dublin. This often meant that additional time out of the salon was required for travel. Furthermore, additional costs were incurred for travel, and on occasion, accommodation if the programme spanned several days.

Some of the more important speakers travel with an assistant, who just sits on the side. Why can't they go to another location down the country and give a talk on what the main conference is about. People would be very interested in this and you'd have high attendance for both events. It would make it so much easier and you wouldn't feel like you were missing out all the time'

A smaller number of respondents indicated that the absence of a financial reward (9%), career advancement (4%) or that subjects that were too specialised (4%) created barriers to on-going training and development. These are concerns that would need to be addressed within a CPD framework, which would certainly need to adopt a graded approach, so participants could choose a learning activity which aligned with their level of competence. A steering committee representing the business owners and employees would need to form part of the process to ensure that training opportunities meet the needs of many rather than a few, so that accessibility is increased across the sector.

5.15 Identifying industry associations and stakeholders

There are a host of industry organisations and stakeholders where support should be sought in order to successfully implement a CPD framework. It is critical that direct business owners and employees within the sector have a voice in the development and maintenance of a CPD framework. There is also a requirement for engagement from those who support the sector such as training providers, insurance providers, event co-ordinators salon suppliers and manufacturers.

- **IMAGE Skillnet** is a division of Skillnet Ireland and commissioner of the current research. They are a dedicated national learning network that supports workforce development within the Irish Hair and Beauty industry²¹.
- **The Hair and Beauty Industry Confederation of Ireland (HABIC)** was founded in 2019. It is a national non-profit organisation committed to driving economic and reputational growth across the entire Hair and Beauty sector. This is achieved through the development of industry standards, job creation and personal development²².
- **The Irish Hairdressing Federation (IHF)** is a voluntary group operational since 1974. They work to raise the status of hairdressing as a profession in Ireland, provide advisory and developmental services and promote professional standards within the profession²³.
- **The Hairdressing Council of Ireland (HCI)** is a voluntary non-profit group who work to present a united voice to Government to raise standards and recognition of the hairdressing industry. They also support members by offering an advice hub and hosting industry events²⁴.
- **Synergy Hair Group** is a non-profit group made up of small hairdressing and barbering businesses in Munster. Their aim is to provide affordable training to all members and staff in a relaxed environment. They are committed to raising the professional bar through ongoing professional development²⁵.



21 <https://www.imageskillnet.ie>

22 <https://habic.ie/>

23 <https://irishhairfed.com>

24 <http://hairdressingcouncil.ie/>

<https://www.facebook.com/barbersocietyofireland/>

25 <https://www.facebook.com/Synergy-Hair-Group-125150888228239>

- **The Barber Society of Ireland** creates a collective and unified voice between all barbers throughout Ireland. They offer support, guidance, advice and recommendations to members²⁶.
- **The Irish Massage Therapists Association (IMTA)** was founded in 1990. It is a non-profit, professional body providing self-regulation to the massage industry²⁷.
- **Irish Spa Association (ISA)** are the authoritative voice within the Spa Industry aiming to impact change at a Government and policy level. They foster professionalism and growth amongst their members by providing educational resources, networking opportunities and analytics²⁸.
- The Federation of Irish Complementary Therapy Associations (FICTA) champions the collective interests of complementary therapists and alternative medicine practitioners²⁹.

Some 57% of hairdressing managers indicated that they had a training plan, and 52% indicated that they also had a training budget. For barbering 56% of managers indicated that they had both a training budget and a training plan. For beauty therapy, 61% indicated that they had a training plan, and 55% a training budget.

This data is important for several reasons. Firstly, the fact that over half of the respondents have a training plan in place, indicates the importance of on-going training and development to a business. Secondly, for hair and beauty professionals, the data indicates that not all businesses had a budget to meet their training plan. It is reasonable to assume that training budgets will be significantly affected considering the Covid 19 pandemic and that salons need to budget for the appropriate health and safety measures, coupled with a reduced client turnover. Given that the sector embraced online learning during the lockdown, this new trend needs to be capitalised on. The development of additional online learning opportunities is required to free up money to attend practical events.

5.16 Moving towards a community of practice

Do you have a training plan?/Do you have a training budget?

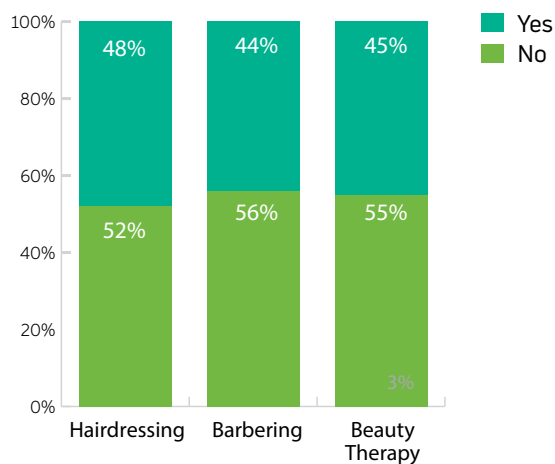
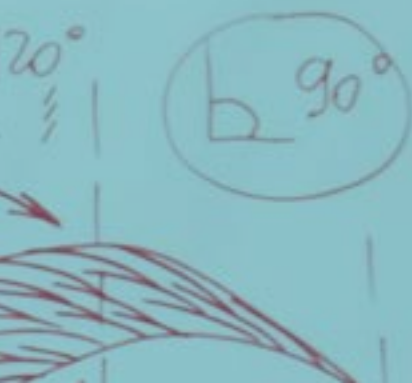


Figure 14: Survey data – Percentage of business owners with a training plan and training budget. (N = 109, Hairdressing, n = 9, Barbering, n = 49, Beauty Therapy).

...the fact that over half of respondents have a training plan in place, indicates the importance of on-going training and development to a business.

26 <https://www.facebook.com/barbersocietyofireland/>
 27 <https://www.messageireland.org/>
 28 <https://www.irishspaassociation.ie/>
 29 <https://www.ficta.com/>

Given that the sector embraced online learning during the lockdown, this new trend needs to be capitalised on. The development of additional online learning opportunities is required to free up money to attend practical events.



6.0 Recommendations and Proposal for the Hair and Beauty Sector CPD Framework

6.1 Recommendations based on the BABTEC and CIRI CPD Models

- Individual or business-centered membership model:** The business-centered approach utilised in the CIRI CPD model has the benefits of centralising control over employee CPD compliance. This method would also provide professional recognition at the salon level. However, the drawbacks are that increased annual membership costs are incurred by the business and there are increased administration demands. In the individual membership model adopted by BABTEC employees manage their own records, and membership costs are distributed. Some of the benefits of business-centered membership could be incorporated into an individual membership model. For instance, adding mandatory CPD requirements to the employment contract which would promote compliance. Regular performance reviews would assist with monitoring CPD. Business and individual recognition could be achieved with a condition for employees to enter their place of employment in the CPD Hub. This could be linked to a professional recognition register. Therefore, this research recommends an individual membership model.
- CPD Framework:** Development opportunities in the BABTEC model are self-directed. The CIRI model utilises pillars to guide development opportunities. This is an efficient way to identify skill gaps as performance reviews could be utilised to allocate hours to each pillar.

Consequently, this research recommends the use of pillars to inform CPD opportunities.

- CPD Content:** The content of both models is informed by business needs. Consequently, this research recommends that the CPD framework is industry driven.
- CPD Engagement:** The CIRI CPD model allocates annual engagement hours by job function and learning mode. The BABTEC model has a fixed number of annual engagement hours, with no mode requirements. This research has identified that learning needs differ by function, and that informal learning is fundamental to the industry. Consequently, the recommendation is to adopt the CIRI approach.
- CPD Membership Conditions:** Both models require a pre-requisite qualification for membership. CIRI has the additional requirement for insurance and tax compliance. These conditions should be built into the recognition registry.
- CPD Delivery:** The CIRI CPD model allows competent staff members to deliver training. This is not incorporated in the BABTEC model. This element is required for the Hair and Beauty sector. Consequently, this research recommends the CIRI approach here.



6.2 The 4 CPD Pillars with examples of training and development opportunities

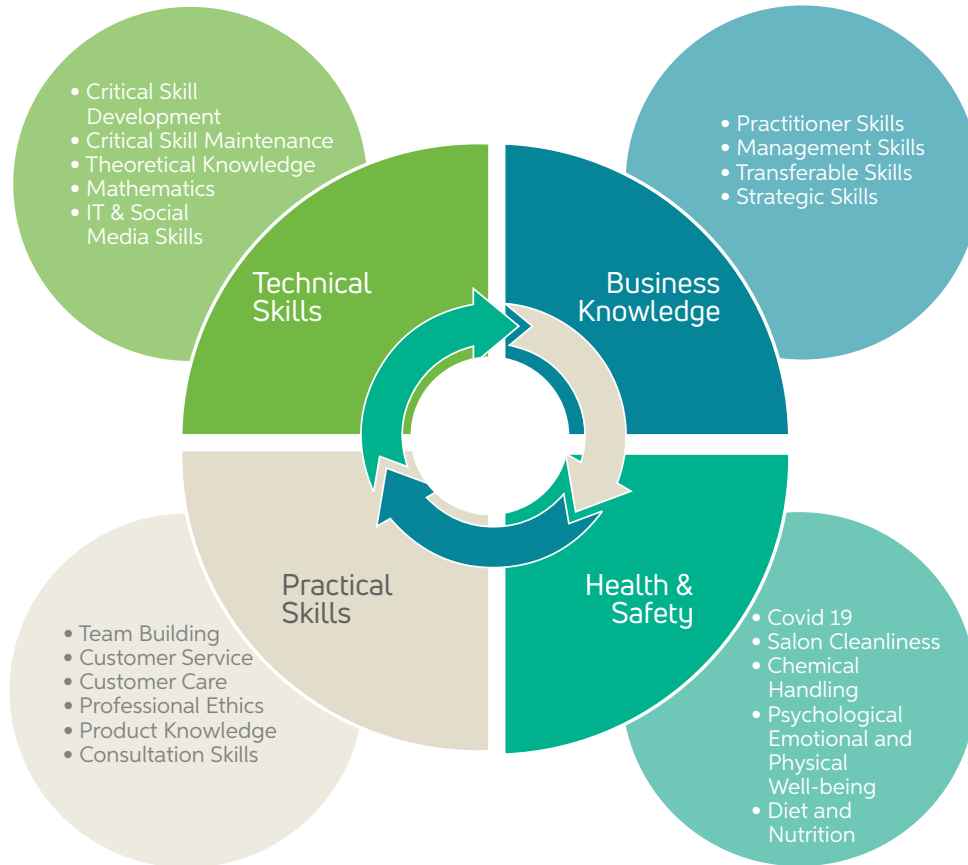


Figure 15: Proposed conceptual pillars and components of a CPD framework

6.3 The 4 CPD Pillars

This research identified 4 pillars with associated content that should inform the development of the proposed CPD framework

Technical Skills

Much of the current training and development is focused on developing technical skills, new techniques or products. Experiential learning is critical to these professions so many training events are carried out in salon.

- Methods for recognising formal and informal learning are required.

Other development opportunities require attending a formal course. Currently many of the courses are hosted in Dublin which incurs additional cost and additional travel time.

These courses need to be more accessible to ensure that everyone gets the opportunity to attend. The newly adopted post-Covid blended learning model will help here.

Mathematics and measurements are very important across the sector and are required for mixing products, and coordinating/recording treatments. It was felt that the younger professionals would benefit if these skills were included within CPD development opportunities.

- The system needs to be graded to facilitate learning at different levels.

IT and Social Media have become both a business need and a tool to enhance the learning activities. While the younger generation may be very proficient in this area, there is scope to develop learning activities so that all professionals can engage with non-formal learning activities.

COVID 19 and New Methods of Learning

The Covid 19 pandemic has created new opportunities for training and development. By segmenting learning into online theoretical components and practical workshops, many professionals continued to develop their technical skills during the Covid lockdown. This new blended learning model is highly efficient. It means that professionals can learn the theory of a technique before attending a class. This reduces cost and time out of the salon. Consequently, incorporating this model into a CPD framework will greatly increase development opportunities across all 4 pillars.

Knowledge of new products and techniques needs to be learned at two levels. Firstly, the scientific level, so that the uses and contradictions are clearly understood. Secondly at the laypersons level, so information can be clearly explained to the client.

- The development of mandatory foundational anatomy and physiology programmes as a pre-requisite to brand/manufacture training is required. Other programmes such as the foundations of laser treatments and IPL need to be established.

Practical Skills

Client Consultation

Increasing customer expectations and theoretical knowledge means that client consultation has become very detailed requiring both aesthetic and scientific knowledge. This is an area where it was felt the industry could really establish a professional profile. There are industry best practices, in terms of greeting the client, body language and the physical environment. The content of the consultation should include an investigation of the client's lifestyle, hair or skin type, benefits and contradictions, any underlying medical conditions or medications and aftercare details.

- The introduction of a value-added service model in a post Covid 19 environment is critical to sustaining a business. Operationalizing this model across the sector is a new requirement for CPD.

Given that the industry is constantly evolving with new techniques and products, knowledge of treatments in terms of the benefits and risks to a client is crucial. The professional must be able to deliver the information in an easily understood manner. The client should leave the salon feeling like they have had both a relaxing and an educational experience.

- Brand and Manufacturer collaboration is crucial.

Service Delivery

The relationship between the client and the professional can be a minefield, where a trip to the salon is often viewed as a trip to the therapist. Establishing clear professional boundaries while making the client feel welcome and relaxed is a valuable skill which can be learned through observation and practice. This is an area which needs to be formally developed within a CPD system.

- A practitioner's code of ethics needs to be established.

Team Building

Several of the interview participants felt that there was a need for the inclusion of team building activities during quieter business times so that an individual would feel more supported and less overwhelmed on busier days. This may become even more important post-Covid 19, due to staff scheduling and online learning methods. A positive salon culture would also positively influence service delivery, which translates to client retention and decreased staff turnover.

- Formal training on developing and maintaining a salon culture needs to be incorporated into a CPD model.

Business Knowledge

Interview and focus group participants were concerned at the low level of business knowledge within the sector. The requirements for business knowledge differ dependent on the role. Practitioners require the skills to run their own column. Management level staff require the skills to lead a team and successfully run the business. Clear progression pathways from practitioner to manager roles need to be defined.

- Business knowledge needs to be taught on a tiered basis, accounting for practitioner and managerial roles.

There is also a need to collaborate with third level institutions in order to grow bespoke modular progression options and future proof the industry. A focus on the strategic transferrable skills such as leadership, conflict management and performance management is required.

- A CPD model is needed to emphasise the transferable skills within the profession.

Health, Safety & Well-being

Although the industry is unregulated, health and safety training within the salon is a regular occurrence. However, there is concern within hairdressing and barbering that there are no industry guidelines and staff are relying on

common sense. The NSAI document ISO TC 228 – Tourism and related services gives some very general information but mainly targets tourism services³⁰. Chemicals are widely used so inhalation of fumes or burns are a credible concern. Other reactions can range from skin irritation to shortness of breath.

- The development of programmes specific to chemical injuries and reactions is required.
- Training on infection control and annual training on advanced treatment equipment is required.

NSAI document EN 17226 does contain specific guidelines for beauty professionals. However, these are just best practices. With services such as laser treatment and micro-needling and oncology therapies, there is a very fine but critical line between the services of beauty and medical professionals. A reliance on best practices and ethical behaviour is not enough. A minimum requirement is the development of accredited salon safety programmes. Ultimately, regulation is necessary to ensure safe processes and procedures.

- Regulations rather than guidelines are required for health and safety.

As regards salon sanitation, the Covid 19 pandemic means that health and safety guidelines are very clear. Given the seriousness of the situation, these guidelines will need on-going development. Specific training which could be delivered online is a necessary requirement for this sector.

There was also concern with the lack of events around personal health and wellbeing. Maintaining physical health, diet and exercise, psychological and emotional health are all areas which need to be developed within a CPD framework.

- Self-care programmes which support professional well-being need to be developed.
- Programmes which explore client relational strategies are needed

6.4 Requirements for the development of a CPD system for the Hair and Beauty Sector

- A coordinating body needs to be identified. HABIC may be a good choice here as they represent members from the entire sector.
- This body needs to form a coalition with industry stakeholders, such as representative industry groups, suppliers, manufacturers, public and private training providers, product distributors etc.
- An advisory group consisting of representatives from across the sector needs to be formed. Their role will be to provide strategic direction and guidance on development and implementation of the framework.
- A steering committee consisting of business owners and staff in direct practice to ensure that the training opportunities are aligned with the members needs
- A system for verifying qualifications and experience of members.
- A method in co-operation with the Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) to determine how industry recognised qualifications can be mapped to the NFQ framework as 'supplementary' or 'special purpose awards'.
- Some industry specialists already have an annual requirement for CPD, particularly if they are members of a professional organisation. For instance, trichology, oncology aesthetics, massage therapy, reflexology, Internal/External verifier (IVA/EVA) and training roles. A mechanism which links additional CPD obligations to the proposed system is required. This will ensure that individuals are not overwhelmed by learning requirements.
- A central repository where members can register for learning activities and upload certificates to record CPD. This system should allow individuals to choose from several pre-defined categories in order to assign credits/points to their account.
- A model which identifies how learning activities will be measured in terms of practical utility within the business.
- A scoring mechanism for each learning activity. A BABTAC model is provided within this research.
- A framework outlining how learning activities outside of those in the main repository can be submitted for points.
- A system which defines criteria by which training providers are measured, endorsed and audited.
- A template for individuals to reflect and plan their learning needs in addition to recording and measuring the learning outcomes.
- A system which would facilitate random audits of training records.

30 <https://www.iso.org/committee/375396.html>

- The initial establishment of this system will require a budget for technology (CPD hub, web app, website etc.). The Government and industry stakeholders such as manufacturers, training providers, Skillnet Ireland, should be approached for this funding.

The ongoing role of the co-ordinating body

Once the system is established, the co-ordinating body will be responsible for the overall management and recording of the system. This will include.

- Establishing the standards within the CPD system.
- Ongoing engagement with the advisory and steering committees.
- Monitoring the quality and content of learning events.
- Assessing events based on participation rates.
- Actively sourcing learning activities.
- Promoting awareness and encouraging registration with the system.
- Exploring options for additional funding.
- Exploring options for on-going recognition and benefits.

6.5 Structure of a CPD framework

- A tiered mandatory approach is recommended.
- The tiered approach similar to the CIRI model should be adopted. The amount of annual CPD should be dependent on the role.
- The framework needs to be designed on a requirement to achieve a minimum number of engagement points annually. Part-time employees should complete a pro-rated number of hours.
- A predefined number of hours within each pillar needs to be defined for each role.
- A bottom up approach is preferred. The industry has the knowledge but needs support to successfully deliver the framework. The CIRI framework recognises that in-house training can be delivered by a competent staff member.
- The system should allow members to download a record of their learning activities in addition to uploading activities.
- The system needs to be optimised for mobile devices.
- Learning activities need to be measurable and have tangible outcomes.
- It needs to include a range of learning modalities including formal classes and demonstrations, informal salon demonstrations, independent learning through magazine articles, websites or blogs, YouTube and shadowing.
- The post Covid learning environment needs to be capitalised on. More online learning opportunities need

to be developed across all four pillars.

- The system requires engagement from a variety of industry stakeholders. Given their influence, it was recommended that manufacturer buy-in should be targeted first.
- Membership should be free for the first 12 months with a minimum fee thereafter.
- The system should be linked to benefits such as insurance discounts, manufacturer discounts etc.
- The cost for delivering training should be negotiated based on the number of participants or the frequency of participant engagement.

6.6 Types of Recognised Learning

- **Formal learning:** This is typically provided by education or training institutions, with structured learning objectives, learning time, and learning support. It is intentional on the part of the learner and leads to certification. For example, attending QQI, VTCT/ITEC, City & Guilds, CIBTAC or CIDESCO training events or taking college courses.
- **Non-formal learning:** This is not provided by an education or training institution and typically does not lead to certification. It is intentional on the part of the learner and has structured objectives, times and support. Examples include reading professional articles or blogs, watching YouTube videos, shadowing colleagues or participating in practical in-house demonstrations.
- **Informal learning:** This results from daily activities related to work, life or leisure. It is not structured and usually does not lead to certification. In most cases, it is unintentional on the part of the learner. Examples include team co-operation or excellence in customer service.

6.7 Endorsing Learning

- A process needs to be established in order to endorse learning providers. The provider needs to demonstrate that the activity or course is of high quality and has practical learning outcomes for the individual.
- Learning activities should be graded so members can easily identify the most appropriate activity for their level/needs.
- Membership benefits for the learning provider need to be established and clearly communicated.
- An area within the CPD hub should be designed so the members can easily browse through the learning activities available. Progression pathways should be identified so that individuals can plan their learning journey



- For informal learning, activities that have clear learning outcomes and practical application need to be identified. Individuals are responsible for their planning and recording their learning activities. They will need to be able to demonstrate what learning gap a particular activity is filling and what practical benefit it met.
- A template for planning and recording learning should be available to all members. This could be a simple word or excel document which details the following.

Reflection and planning of learning

- What learning needs to take place?
- How is the learning relevant to practice?
- How the learning will occur?
- What the success criteria will be?
- Target date for review and completion

Action and evaluation of learning

- When the learning activity was completed?
- What the activity involved?
- The learning outcomes from this activity?
- How will this learning be applied to practice and what will be the benefit?
- Any further action required for the next CPD activity?

Individuals will be required to maintain a record of all CPD activities. A model which allows the co-ordinating body to audit individual training records needs to be established.

6.8 Types of CPD Activities

- Formal courses/demonstrations
- Manufacturer training
- In-salon demonstrations/events
- Engagement with blogs/articles/podcast/YouTube
- Attendance at industry events
- Subscription to industry printed material
- Participation in industry events to boost recognition of the industry.
- Authoring of CPD material

6.9 Engagement with CPD

- Opportunities for engaging in the 4 pillars should be linked to an annual performance review.
- A bottom up approach is preferred where the industry dictates what learning, and development opportunities are required. Having a mechanism that will enable professionals to identify learning gaps and submit a learning request would be a good start to encouraging participation in CPD
- Time off to attend courses, perform/attend a practical demonstration or engage with informal learning needs to be facilitated.
- Activities must be linked to measurable learning outcomes.
- Training providers should be encouraged to provide digital certificates of attendance which can be easily uploaded to a CPD hub.
- Training Providers such as QQI, City & Guilds, CIDESCO, CIBTAC or VTCT/ITEC should be encouraged to issue digital badges on course completion. SOLAS currently issue badges for several training programmes.
- If used, digital badges should only be issued for qualifying significant gains in knowledge, skills or competencies.

Encouraging engagement through authoring content

The industry is known for its creativity. Many of the participants in this research had in excess of fifteen

years' experience. The increased engagement with online resources during the Covid lockdown was not just limited to learning. Professionals also used this medium to develop home care videos and posters for clients. There is an opportunity here to utilise both the creativity and experience to develop training manuals, videos and best practice guides which can be utilised as part of a CPD framework. A system which confers points to those who submit a learning activity proposal could be developed. If the application is successful, the candidate could then develop their learning material. This material could be made available to the sector. Other points-based activities such as giving 'a day in the life' presentations at school career guidance events should be considered to attract the younger generation to the sector.

6.10 Recognition of CPD

There is a need to develop a mechanism which formally recognises CPD in an identifiable manner. Paper certificates of attendance are currently the most popular mechanism for recognition. The CPD hub would need to allow participants to photograph and upload paper certificates. For major learning gains, digital badges were the preferred mechanism. Engagement with Social Media is very popular across the industry. Having the ability to share progress would make this system very attractive, particularly for younger professionals. For organisations with a website, an area displaying the achievements of staff should be developed.

A registration system similar to the one operated by RECI could be utilised. Registration needs to be facilitated on both an individual and business basis. Individuals should require evidence of qualification/experience. Business owners should provide evidence of insurance. A publicly available register of salons and individuals who are actively engaging in the CPD initiative should be developed. A compliance sticker should be issued for display at salon entry points. This may encourage other businesses to get involved and it would boost professional recognition of the sector.

Digital Badges for unaccredited Industry recognised training and development

While this research found that accredited training is preferred, it does not have to be from a formal course provider. A digital badge system which highlights unaccredited industry recognised training would be very beneficial. Criteria for issuing a digital badge for knowledge, skills and competencies needs to be clearly established, so that they do not suffer the same fate as the current paper-based certificates of attendance and ultimately lose value. For instance, an initial badge could be created for individuals who register with the CPD system and another

badge for a business who supports employee registration. An open badge licence can be purchased so that the industry can utilise their creativity to design their own badges and set their own criteria. For instance, Apple Watch motivates consumers by giving awards for extra-ordinary fitness achievements or for achieving a new fitness level³¹. Badges should be linked to perks such as recognition on the business webpage, some scheduled time off, a voucher, pay increase or promotion.

Post nominal letters

A system which would allow clients to distinguish professionals based on their experience and expertise would be beneficial. This option should be explored within the CPD system. The adoption of a tiered framework, where annual CPD hours were dependant on the role would help to identify these individuals. This would serve to distinguish those with experience and expertise within the industry and give others a goal to strive for.

6.11 CPD Credits

CPD hours should be calculated on a tiered level. A co-ordinating body needs to create a repository where certificates can be uploaded for credit. The structure of the points system along with the number of credits per learning activity needs to be established. Training providers need to be endorsed to ensure that their programme is of high quality. A repository of training providers along with the programme level and programme details needs to be hosted on the site. This should be developed in a format that is mobile phone friendly.

6.12 CPD Cost

Using current examples, minimum registration costs need to be considered. The fee should factor in the tangible benefits, such as the reduced cost for ongoing training and development activities, the ability to browse through a library of events, registration with events and management of CPD points. Participants should also be updated with new and upcoming events. If a digital badge is issued for registration a small additional fee could be considered. The cost of training activities and events will need to be negotiated with training providers. This should be done based on the level of training, quality of training and modality of training. For employers, the cost will likely be considered in relation to the practical value to their business and the cost of facilitating time off.

³¹<https://www.apple.com/ie/watch/close-your-rings/>



7.0 Career progression and career pathways



Within this research, concerns were raised regarding the absence of formal career pathways and National Occupational Standards (NOS), across the sector. This obscures the opportunities for advancement and was viewed as a contributing factor to the skills shortage.

'There are no guidelines, like there are for other trades. There is no one to say where your career will go. It's not written down anywhere.'

Despite the absence of a structured career development framework, the consensus supports that if an employee is motivated and the employer is willing to provide support, then the career opportunities and pathways can take many exciting directions. Business needs determine the types of services offered. It is important to take the type of salon into consideration when planning career goals. Given the creative nature of the sector, roles and career pathways can be crafted by individuals.

Experiential learning and practical experience are crucial for career progression. This research provides a high-level mapping of career opportunities, with a brief description of what the roles entail. A vital component to determine career progression for those new to the profession involves initial training. Survey data indicated that 62% of hairdressers, 67% of barbers and 73% of beauty professionals felt that the industry needed to be regulated in order to establish industry standards. Interview and focus group data further supported this view, with the consensus that regulation needed to begin with the training providers.

'Career progression needs a good salon and a person who is motivated.'

Regulation of the Industry

Ireland is one of the few countries which does regulate the Hair and Beauty sector. In many European countries, professional practice is dependent on providing evidence of a qualification³². In the US, a licence to practice is dependent on providing evidence of a qualification and annual CPD participation. The number of hours varies from state to state, with minimum of four and a maximum of 30³³. Participants of this research felt that 20 – 30 hours of targeted CPD would be sufficient to demonstrate competence and professional service delivery.

³² https://ec.europa.eu/growth/tools-databases/regprof/index.cfm?action=map_complex&profession=

³³ <https://www.cosmetology-license.com/cosmetologist-license/>

Understanding the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)

In order to understand career progression within the Hair and Beauty sector, it is necessary to begin with the historical context. The National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) was developed in 2003. It is a system of ten levels used to standardise and rank qualifications in terms of the level of knowledge, skills and competence gained. Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) has responsibility to develop, promote and maintain the Irish NFQ. Any course mapped to the NFQ framework has been approved by the QQI as high-quality and widely valued nationally and internationally.

How is the NFQ used?

- Learners can use the NFQ framework to make informed choices on their education, training and skill progression. Courses that are mapped to the NFQ can be compared and career progression pathways can be planned.
- Employers use the NFQ to determine what qualification level is required for work performance and to provide fair recognition for qualifications.
- Educational institutes use the NFQ to determine an individual’s aptitude for a programme and to identify pathways for career progression.

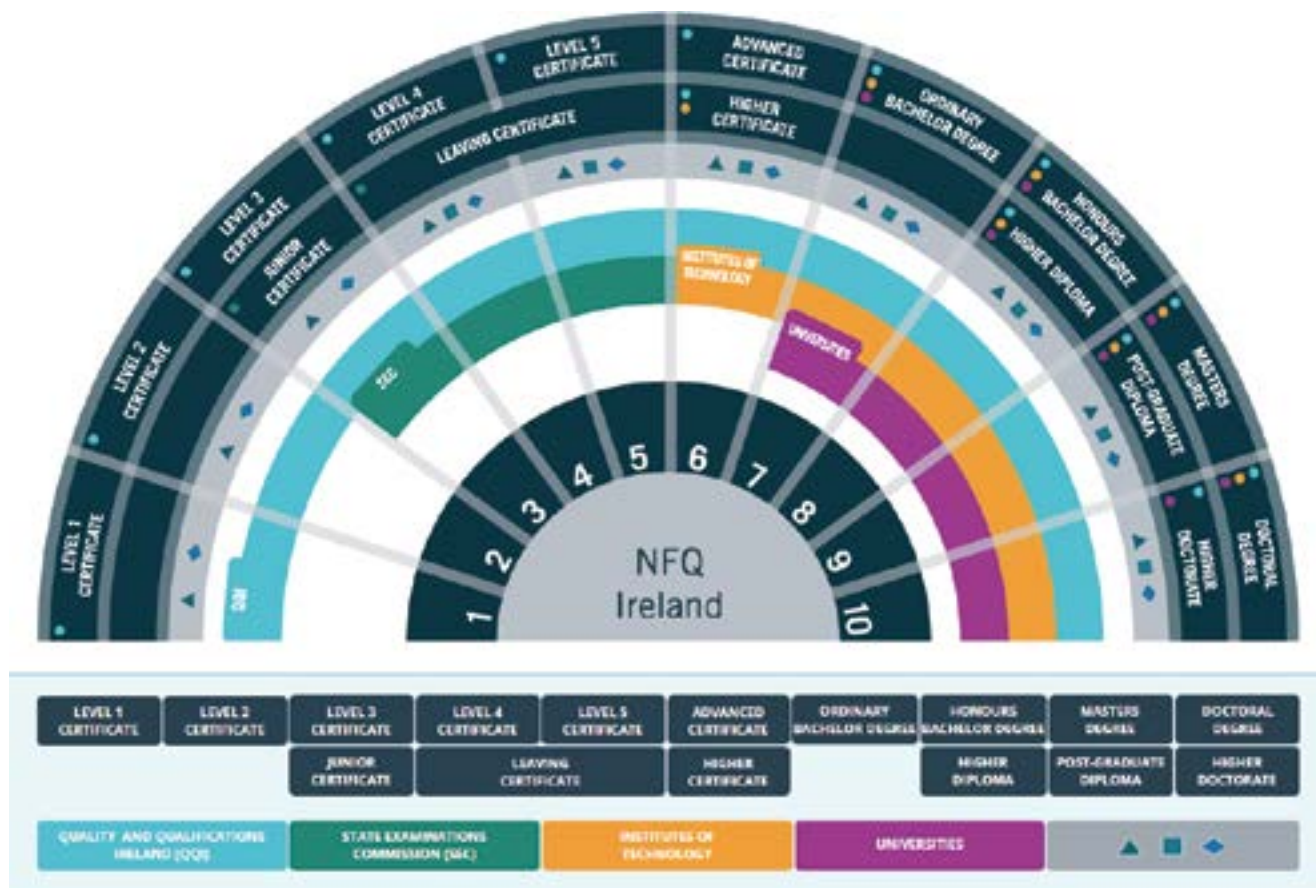


Figure 16: Irish National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)³⁴

³⁴[https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/National-Framework-of-Qualifications-\(NFQ\).aspx](https://www.qqi.ie/Articles/Pages/National-Framework-of-Qualifications-(NFQ).aspx)

Understanding the NFQ

There are several categories of award mapped to the framework.





Symbol	Award Type	Description
	Major awards	The main class of award made at a level. E.G. Junior Certificate, Leaving Certificate, Level 5/6 Certificates, Honours Bachelor's Degree.
	Minor awards	Shorter duration courses for partial completion of the outcomes of a minor award. E.G. upskilling to learn a new skill or knowledge related to a major qualification.
	Supplemental awards	Learning which is additional to a major award. E.G. short formal CPD courses for qualified professionals.
	Special-purpose awards	Learning for specific, relatively narrow, purposes. E.G. manufacturer training.

Table 9: Categories of award mapped to the NFQ framework

Today, all major hair qualifications are mapped to a minimum level 5 on the QQI framework, with programmes in beauty therapy mapped to level 6. To ensure quality and recognition, individuals considering a career in hair and beauty must check that a course is mapped to the framework. Individuals already working in the profession may have completed their qualification prior to the development of the NFQ or may find that their qualification was never mapped to the NFQ. For employers in this sector, practical experience is currency, so experience and work performance directly influence recognition and career development opportunities. Regardless of the level of qualification achieved, a trade test is typically utilised in order to determine the level of expertise.

What are the issues with the current qualification system for hair and beauty?

- There is a lack of consistency across the sector, in terms of the skill set required for salon positions. National Occupational Standards (NOS) are needed in order to map career development pathways. A CPD programme would assist in identifying skill gaps and career progression pathways.
- While training and development is integral to this sector, the absence of any guidelines means that some salons are not developing their staff. This contributes to lack of motivation, skill gaps and shortages. It also presents the inaccurate view that career development opportunities are limited. A mandatory CPD programme would ensure that qualified professionals have access to ongoing development opportunities.
- The sector is evolving at a rapid rate in terms of methods

and technologies. This is resulting in the development of specialist short courses and training, which often only confer a certificate of attendance. As this trend continues, professionals may find that despite having the required skillset, 'on paper', they do not have the qualifications to register with these programmes. A CPD programme could legitimise specialist training and development to ensure that it can be measured, documented and recorded.

- In addition to evolving technologies and techniques, the nature of work performed within this sector is also changing. Consultation skills now form the foundation of all client relationships. Many participants of this research had completed short courses related to customer service, health and well-being. However, the holistic nature of this professional service is not appreciated. A CPD framework would acknowledge the relational aspects and transferrable skills of this profession, by highlighting these less tangible supplemental competencies.
- At present, hairdressing and barbering qualifications are mapped at level 5 on the NFQ framework. In order to facilitate progression to third level education, qualifications mapped at level 6 are needed. Non formal learning and industry specific specialist training needs to be recognised. A CPD programme could present opportunities for the development of stackable micro credentials at level 6 which could be counted as merit to access third level education.



Identifying career opportunities and pathways within Hairdressing and Barbering

Considering a career in Hairdressing

The National Hairdressing Apprenticeship³⁵ was developed in 2019 and is viewed as a flagship programme offering a statutory recognised standard for the industry. It is the result of a collaboration between a variety of stakeholders, including IMAGE Skillnet, and it is approved by SOLAS and the National Further Education Authority. The three-year programme is industry-led with an 80/20 framework where students spend four days a week in a salon environment and one day a week in an ETB training centre. This programme is a vital win for the sector. In addition to providing a mechanism to address the skill shortages, it will also address the issue of inconsistencies in the current provision of training. Newly qualified stylists will be ready for the salon floor once they qualify. Another important fact about this programme is that graduates emerge with an NFQ level 6 qualification. This means that they are eligible to participate in higher level education at a University, Institute of Technology or private training centre.

The National Apprenticeship programme will result in a new wave of highly qualified stylists. This level of training has not been available to these professionals since the development of the Senior Trade exam. However, this course was never mapped to the NFQ, so it remains an industry recognised standard, rather than a national or internationally recognised qualification.

Consequently, in order to avoid the issue where apprentices are viewed as being more qualified 'on paper' than current professional hairdressers, an RPL (Recognition of Prior Learning) programme is in development. This programme will offer an opportunity for qualified hairdressers with industry experience to upskill to the same level as the apprentices. Accordingly, they will also receive a QQI level 6 certificate and be eligible for higher level education. While still in the planning stages this programme will be of shorter duration than the apprenticeship programme. The objective will seek to identify individual skill gaps, by taking all types of qualifications (major, minor, specialist and supplemental), along with experience into account. Methods to address these skill gaps will form the basis of the programme. This is a major achievement, which drastically changes the career progression pathways for these professionals. The RPL programme has Government support and is currently being designed by the Education and Training Boards.

The Hairdressing Apprenticeship was developed under the New Apprenticeships 2016 – 2020 policy, which introduced several changes to the previous craft apprenticeships. The new approach includes measures such as the employer pays the apprentice wage. The recent announcement by the Government to provide financial support to employers who register for an apprentice is welcomed by the sector. This means that new Covid 19 restrictions which have resulted in increased financial burden may not deter salons from registering with this programme.

Considering a career in Barbering

The most popular training route for qualified barbers is to gain their qualification through City and Guilds, QQI or VTCT/ITEC. These programmes are offered by Colleges of Further Education, or by private training salons. While length of these courses varies, all typically combine the theoretical and practical components of the role. For instance, for junior barbers, this research found that an initial qualification can be achieved in 12 weeks. However, up to 18 months of practical experience is then required to build confidence and mastery of skills.

Currently, there is no apprenticeship for barbering, although this was explored in the early stages of setting up the Hairdressing Apprenticeship. One roadblock related to an issue where a programme which met the minimum two-year duration regulations could not be established. Nonetheless, participants of this research have suggested that there is scope to develop a statutory Barbering Apprenticeship in collaboration with private colleges. The barbering industry has undergone rapid growth in recent years, so it would be prudent for the Government to re-engage with the industry to explore options. This would facilitate continued growth of the barbering trade without sacrificing health and safety.

Considering a career in Beauty Therapy

The initial qualification for beauty therapists can be achieved through formal courses. Qualifications of one year duration are typically mapped to level 5 on the NFQ framework, with those spanning two years mapped at level 6. A major qualification from QQI, City & Guilds, CIDESCO, CIBTAC or VTCT/ITEC, is required. During this initial training phase, students can also choose from a large variety of minor awards, depending on their areas of interest. Training can take place at a private college or ETB. Following this, up to twelve months salon experience is recommended to build confidence and mastery of skills. The initial training is crucially important for determining employment

³⁵<http://hairdressingapprenticeship.ie/>

opportunities.

A full qualification should be internationally recognised and include practical and theoretical components. The traditional Beauty Therapy qualification is all inclusive, covering facial therapy, body therapy and beauty therapy. Graduates from one of these programmes are equipped to work in either a salon or a spa. The recommended progression pathway following this is a Beauty Therapy Diploma. Additional requirements include an advanced theoretical components exam, project work and 600 hours of practical experience. Students have 2 years to complete this qualification. According to research participants, a Diploma award is highly valued within the industry, making it a worthwhile career investment.

In recent years modular qualifications have been introduced. Consequently, rather than following the traditional all-inclusive route, students can choose to study in one of the three areas - facial therapy, body therapy or beauty therapy. Graduates from one of these programmes are qualified in that specific area only. Those pursuing a career in a salon may opt for the beauty or facial therapy qualifications, whereas those seeking to work in a spa may choose the body therapy qualification. Graduates with two of these qualifications may progress to a Beauty Therapy Diploma award. Ultimately, when deciding on a qualification in Beauty Therapy, individuals should carefully consider the best pathway for their circumstances.

On completion of a major beauty therapy qualification, individuals have a vast choice with regards to career development and progression. Graduates are encouraged to gain additional work experience in a working salon. CPD can then be used to explore the areas they wish to specialise in.

Investigating Career Development Opportunities

Once qualified, CPD is vitally important to keep up with the rapidly evolving trends and techniques. For all roles there is a variety of qualifications and awards which facilitate specialisms and allow individuals to upskill. The skills, competencies and knowledge that these programmes provide are highly valuable to the sector. They are fundamental for a business to remain competitive as they involve services which attract clientele. However, participants of this research felt that these qualifications were generally disregarded by those working outside the industry.

Consequently, opportunities to re-classify some of this learning as 'supplemental learning awards' on the NQF framework needs to be investigated. Participants also felt that to survive, the sector needs to provide for both creative and strategic roles. Both are equally important, and both should confer recognition for the skills, competencies and knowledge they represent.

'This is no longer a cul-de-sac career'

Within the career opportunities, this research identified 5 distinct areas facilitating career progression.

- Direct Practice
- Management
- Education
- Marketing
- Industry Support

All third level institutes provide a pathway for mature applicants, so in these cases, progression is not a problem. A problem does arise if individuals wish to use industry recognised qualifications as credit towards a higher-level qualification. For example, an individual wishing to study trichology or dermatology may already have completed some of the modules in short courses. However, only programmes mapped to the NQF are generally considered in the assessment phase. Going forward, a CPD system would legitimise the industry recognised learning opportunities. Awards such as Micro-credentials, which are mini qualifications that demonstrate skills, knowledge and experience need to be investigated.

Boosting the professional standards across of the industry.

Participants of this research expressed a need to boost the professional standards across the entire sector. This could be achieved with the development of foundational scientific programmes which confer essential knowledge which reflects the holistic approach to services. For instance, knowledge has evolved to reflect that many hair and skin problems could be as a result of diet, lifestyle, hormones, genetics. While these topics are explored during the consultation process, it was felt that a foundational scientific course, as a prerequisite to brand training and mapped to the NQF was needed. This would ensure that professionals are not just treating the issue but exploring contributory factors effectively. In relation to beauty therapy two further areas were identified, the foundations of LED therapy and the foundations of Injectables. Participants also felt there was scope to develop foundational accredited programmes in business management, marketing and quality which directly meet the requirements of this sector. These qualifications would also highlight the transferrable skills which exist within the sector.

Identifying career opportunities and pathways within Hairdressing and Barbering³⁶

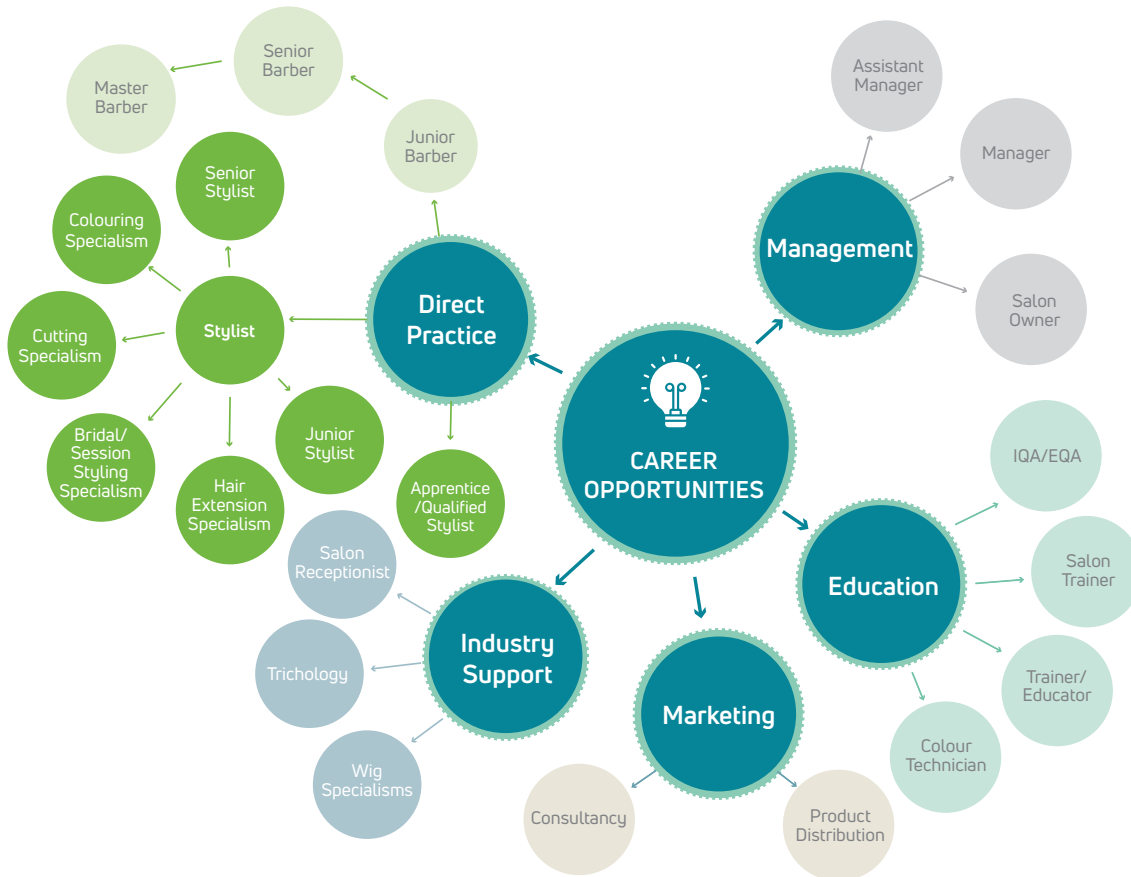


Figure 17: Career Opportunities and pathways within hairdressing and barbering

Interpreting Career Pathways & Roles

The career pathways and roles identified by this research offer a high-level overview of career opportunities. The specific set of skills along with the level of knowledge and competency associated with these roles is beyond the scope of this investigation. This level of detail should be outlined with the development of National Occupational Standards (NOS).

Qualifications in hairdressing and barbering are awarded through QQI, ITEC/VTCT or City & Guilds. Programmes are available through the Education and Training Board (ETB) and private colleges. A full qualification is awarded at level 5 on the NFQ. The senior trade hairdressing qualification is recognised at level 6 within the industry; however, it was never officially mapped to the NFQ framework.

For all roles within Direct Practice, a level 5 qualification in hairdressing/barbering is required. Individuals may then decide to specialise within an area or combine skills to offer professional service in several areas. For roles in Management, Education and Marketing, a relevant hairdressing/barbering qualification, a business qualification and experience in direct practice is recommended. For Government teaching roles, a Level 7 qualification is required. The roles within Industry Support are distinct stand-alone qualifications which are awarded to individuals both within and outside of the hair industry. For wig specialisms, experience within direct practice is recommended. Trichology is an exception as individuals from a variety of backgrounds choose this career. While salon receptionists are not required to have the professional skillset to provide hair service, they are required to have in-depth knowledge of all treatments and services.

³⁶Career pathways and role profiles generated from interview/focus group data and online web search.

7.2 High level identification of roles and specialisms within Hairdressing & Barbering.

Each specialism assumes a pre-requisite level 5 hair qualification

Hairdressing and Barbering Career Opportunities		High Level Description
Junior Stylist	Skill Development:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally, a title given to an individual who is newly qualified and needs to build on practical in-salon experience. • Focus here is on building confidence and gaining experience in salon environment, • Refinement of colouring, basic cutting and finishing techniques before moving towards more advanced skills. • Time in this position can be up to 12 months, dependent on initial training and motivation to learn.
	Pathways & Progression:	Shadowing senior stylists, formal short courses, manufacturer workshops, practical experience and demonstrations, independent learning. Progression routes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stylist, specialism, senior stylist
Junior Barber	Skill Development:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaining experience and confidence on the salon floor in order to grow competence in fades and razor work. • Moving toward advanced techniques such as cutting and shaving. • Approximately 18 months salon experience as a junior is recommended.
	Pathways & Progression:	Shadowing senior stylists, formal short courses, manufacturer workshops, practical experience and demonstrations, independent learning. Progression routes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior barber
Senior Stylist	Skill Development:	Highly competent at advanced levels of cutting, colouring and finishing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: Hair and scalp science, hair and face architecture, hair design, health and sanitation, professional ethics, customer relationship management, merchandising and inventory, business and IT skills. • Theory & Practice: Competence in broad skillset and knowledge across services, professional consultation skills, digital marketing, professional tools and equipment, professional products, health and safety, mentoring and leadership skills.
	Pathways & Progression:	Requires on-going manufacturer workshops across entire skillset, formal short courses, practical experience demonstrations and independent learning. A minimum of 6 years salon experience is recommended. Progression routes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialism, management, training and education, marketing.

High level identification of roles and specialisms within Hairdressing & Barbering.
 Each specialism assumes a pre-requisite level 5 hair qualification

Hairdressing and Barbering Career Opportunities		High Level Description
Senior/ Master Barber	Skill Development:	Specialises in male grooming, including advanced cutting, colouring, trimming, finishing and shaving. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: Product science, hair, skin and scalp science, professional ethics, business and IT skills. • Theory & Practice: Specific skills and techniques in cutting including clipper work, scissors-over-comb and hot lather shaving with a straight blade, digital marketing, health and safety, professional tools and equipment, professional products, mentoring and leadership skills.
	Pathways & Progression:	Requires progressive manufacturer workshops across entire skillset, formal short courses, practical experience, demonstrations and independent learning. A minimum of 4 years salon experience recommended. <p>Progression routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management, training and education, marketing.
Colour	Skill Development:	Expertise in advanced colouring/correction theory and techniques. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: Product science, hair and scalp science, hair and face architecture, theory of light and colour, professional ethics, business and IT skills. • Theory & Practice: Colour tone and depth techniques, professional tools and equipment, digital marketing, health and safety, professional products, professional consultation skills.
	Pathways & Progression:	Progressive manufacturer workshops/training in multiple brands, practical experience and demonstrations, independent reading and research on trends. A minimum of 6 years salon experience recommended. <p>Progression routes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Product distribution, training and education, management
Colour Technician	Skill Development:	Employed by a product houses to deliver training to individuals and salons. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: Product science, hair and scalp science, hair and face architecture, theory of light and colour, professional ethics, business, teaching and IT skills. • Theory & Practice: Colour tone and depth techniques, professional tools and equipment, digital marketing, health and safety, professional products, professional teaching skills.
	Pathways & Progression:	A NFQ level 6 Train the Trainer qualification, manufacturer training and workshops. Several years' experience in a colour specialism role. <p>Progression routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional and national opportunities exist. • Third level teaching qualification.

High level identification of roles and specialisms within Hairdressing & Barbering.

Each specialism assumes a pre-requisite level 5 hair qualification

Hairdressing and Barbering Career Opportunities		High Level Description
Cutting Specialism	Skill Development:	<p>Expertise in the principles of hair cutting and design techniques.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: Product science, hair and scalp science, hair and face architecture, hair design, professional ethics, business and IT skills. • Theory & Practice: Cutting and design techniques, professional tools and equipment, digital marketing, health and safety, professional products, professional consultation skills.
	Pathways & Progression:	<p>Progressive manufacturer workshops/training in multiple techniques, practical experience and demonstrations, independent reading and research on trends. A minimum of 6 years salon experience recommended.</p> <p>Progression routes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Product distribution, training and education, management
Bridal/ Session Hairstyling Specialism	Skill Development:	<p>Expertise in bridal vogue and classic styling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: Product science, hair and scalp science, hair and face architecture, hair design, marketing, professional ethics, business and IT skills. • Theory & Practice: Finishing and design techniques, up styling techniques, professional tools and equipment, professional products, digital marketing, health and safety, professional consultation skills.
	Pathways & Progression:	<p>On-going manufacturer training across skillset, formal short courses, practical experience and demonstrations, independent reading and research on trends.</p> <p>Progression routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridal make-up, management, training and education, marketing. • Opportunities in fashion industry, TV/Media, self-employment.
Hair Extension Specialism	Skill Development:	<p>Expertise in hair extension techniques and methods</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: Hair science, hair architecture, tools and techniques, health and sanitation, professional ethics, business and IT skills. • Theory & Practice: Application, removal and aftercare, professional tools and equipment, professional products, marketing, health and safety, professional consultation skills.
		<p>Formal short course, practical experience and demonstrations, independent reading and research on trends.</p> <p>Progression routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialism, management, training and education, marketing. • Opportunities in fashion industry, TV/Media, self-employment.

High level identification of roles and specialisms within Hairdressing & Barbering.
 Each specialism assumes a pre-requisite level 5 hair qualification

Hairdressing and Barbering Career Opportunities		High Level Description
Wig Specialism	Skill Development:	<p>Specialises in wig making, fitting and consultancy for medical hair loss, theatre, film and stage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: Hair science, types and structure, etiquette and hygiene, foundations, tools and techniques, wig knotting, fitting, styling, finishing, maintenance, professional ethics, business and IT skills. • Theory & practice: Etiquette and hygiene, professional tools and equipment, professional products, health and safety, professional consultation skills, fitting, colouring, cutting, finishing, maintenance tools and techniques.
	Pathways & Progression:	<p>Formal short course, practical experience and demonstrations, independent reading and research on trends.</p> <p>Progression routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialism, management, training and education, marketing. • Opportunities in Healthcare sector, Theatre, TV/Media, self-employment
Trichology	Skill Development:	<p>Specialises in the science of hair and scalp disorders. It is the study of hair, hair loss, and scalp diseases</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: Anatomy, physiology, nutrition, chemistry and haircare processes, hair and scalp archaeology, conditions and disorders, tools, techniques and procedures, professional ethics, business and IT skills. • Theory & Practice: Practical experience in a salon or clinic, membership with a professional organisation.
	Pathways & Progression:	<p>Introductory courses are available through ITEC/VTCT. A Diploma in trichology is considered entry level.</p> <p>Progression routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A higher-level degree is required to practice trichology. Professional qualifications are available via distance learning through The Institute of Trichology³⁷. • Opportunities in salon services, healthcare sector, self-employment.

Table 10: Hairdressing and barbering career opportunities with high level job descriptions gained from interview data and web search

37 <https://www.trichologists.org.uk/>

7.3 Career Opportunities within Beauty Therapy

Identifying career opportunities and pathways within Beauty Therapy

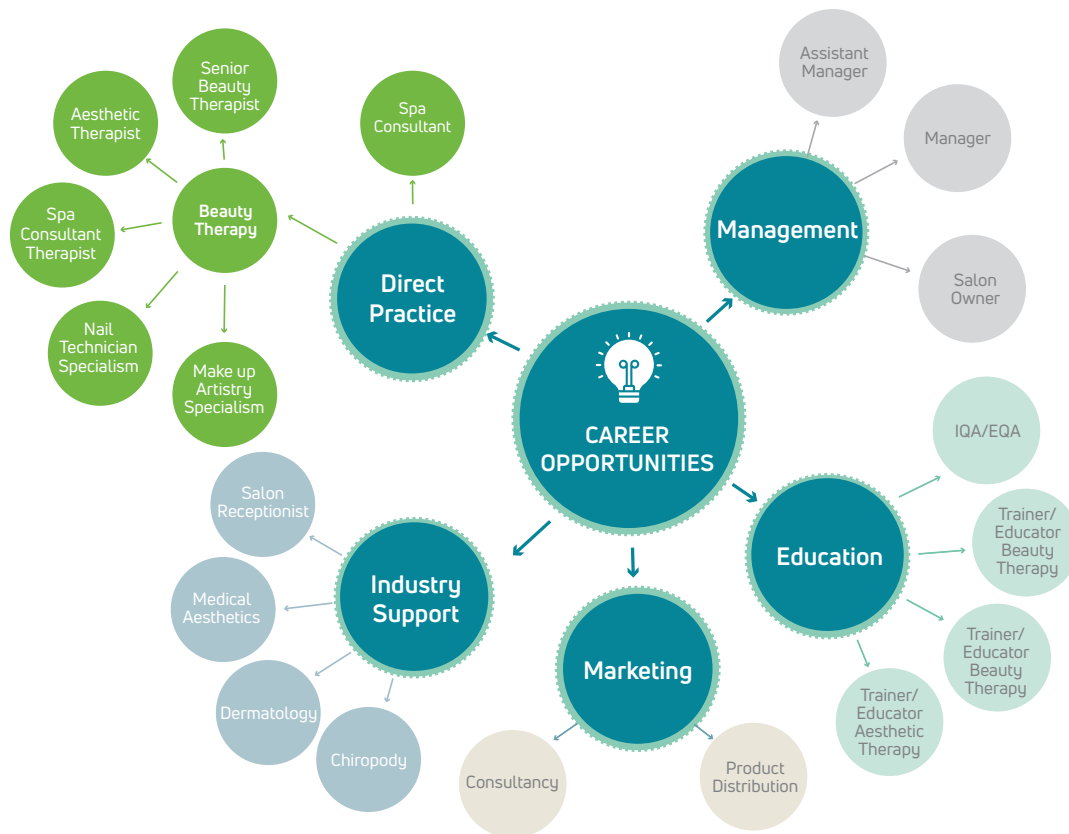


Figure 18: Career Opportunities and pathways within beauty therapy

Interpreting Career Pathways & Roles

The career pathways and roles identified by this research offer a high-level overview of career opportunities within beauty therapy. The specific set of skills along with the level of knowledge and competency associated with these roles is beyond the scope of this investigation. This level of detail should be outlined with the development of National Occupational Standards (NOS).

For all roles, within Direct Practice, a major qualification in beauty therapy, mapped to the NFQ framework at a minimum of level 5 is required. Training is typically delivered full-time over one academic year, or part-time over a longer duration. The Diploma in Beauty Therapy is mapped to NFQ level 6, Individuals should ensure that qualifications are mapped to a minimum level 5 on the framework. Qualifications are awarded through QQI, City & Guilds, CIDESCO, CIBTAC or VTCT/ITEC. Programmes are available through the ETB and private colleges.

For roles in Management, Education and Marketing a relevant beauty qualification, a business qualification and experience in direct practice is recommended. Additionally, for roles within any educational setting a relevant teaching qualification, for instance the Train the Trainer qualification mapped at NFQ 6 is a requirement. For roles teaching within a government setting, for instance at an ETB, a level 7 teaching qualification is required.

The roles within Industry Support are distinct stand-alone qualifications which are awarded to individuals both within and outside of the beauty industry. While salon receptionist is not required to have the professional skillset to provide beauty services, they are required to have in-depth knowledge of all treatments and services.

High level identification of roles and specialisms within Beauty Therapy.

Each specialism assumes a pre-requisite level 5/6 beauty qualification

Beauty Therapy Career Opportunities		High Level Description
Junior Beauty Therapist	Skill Development:	A junior beauty therapist is newly qualified and needs to gain salon experience in non-invasive treatments including waxing, facials, massage, manicures and pedicures. This position requires demonstration of both scientific and theoretical knowledge in addition to the ability to provide treatments. The amount of time spent in this position is dependent on the salon and the quality of experience.
	Pathways & Progression:	<p>Formal Qualification: Major NFQ L5 qualification from a qualifying body plus additional minor certifications.</p> <p>Progression routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialism, Senior Beauty Therapist, Aesthetic Therapist, Spa Therapy. • NFQ L6 Diploma qualification which includes 600 hours of practical experience, an examination and project work.
Beauty Therapist Diplomat	Skill Development:	<p>This role traditionally involves non-invasive treatments and requires up to 12 months' experience in all aspects of beauty therapy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: Anatomy and physiology, nutrition and diet, dermatology, hygiene and sanitation, general skincare, cosmetic science, professional ethics, professional tools and equipment, electrical treatments, product knowledge (application/benefits/contraindications), professional consultation skills, business and IT skills. • Theory & Practice: Skin analysis, facial treatments, manicure/pedicure, facial/body massage, tanning treatments, eye treatments tinting/waxing, body wrapping/exfoliation/waxing techniques, make-up application, professional consultation, mentoring and leadership skills.
	Pathways & Progression:	<p>The most highly recognised major qualification is the level 6 Beauty Therapy Diploma qualification which includes 600 hours of practical experience, an examination and project work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <p>Progression routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist certification in advanced treatments such as laser, IPL, microderm abrasion, micro-needling, oncological therapies, aromatherapy, electrical epilation or oncology or massage therapies. • CIDESCO Postgraduate Diploma. Additional requirements for this award are 3 years practical experience, formal classes (part-time or full-time), a written exam (multiple choice) and a 4000-word thesis. • Third level qualification in Salon/Spa manager/owner, salon trainer/lecturing, aesthetic nursing.

High level identification of roles and specialisms within Beauty Therapy.

Each specialism assumes a pre-requisite level 5/6 beauty qualification

Beauty Therapy Career Opportunities		High Level Description
Beauty Specialist	Skill Development:	Specialises in skincare, Facials, Manicure, Pedicure, Waxing, Makeup and Facial Electricals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory:Skincare, electrical treatments, anatomy and physiology, skin structure, cosmetic science and hygiene, ethics, business procedures and IT skills. • Theory & Practice: Facial treatments, manicure/pedicure, eye treatments tinting/waxing, make-up application, electrical treatments, professional consultation.
	Pathways & Progression:	Level 5 CIBTAC & ITEC Qualifications. <p>Progression routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beauty Therapist. • Specialist certification in additional non-invasive treatments/techniques. • Beauty Therapy Diploma (requires completion of additional module in facial or body therapies)
Spa Therapist/ Consultant	Skill Development:	Specialises in Spa treatments and therapies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: Anatomy and physiology, spa therapy services, nutrition and diet, dermatology, hygiene and sanitation, general skincare, cosmetic science, professional ethics, professional tools and equipment, electrical treatments, product knowledge (application/benefits/contra-indications), professional consultation skills, business and IT skills. • Theory & Practice: Facial treatments, manicure/pedicure, facial/body massage (deep tissue, Swedish, hot stone, sports), tanning treatments, eye treatments tinting/waxing, body wrapping/exfoliation/waxing techniques, make-up application, professional consultation, mentoring and leadership skills
	Pathways & Progression:	A full Beauty Therapy qualification includes spa therapy as part of the curriculum. Those who choose a modular pathway graduate with a Certificate award and require 200 hours of practical experience. Spa experience is required before receiving this award. <p>•</p> <p>Progression routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist certification in additional spa treatments/techniques, oncological therapies. • Professional membership of Irish Massage Therapist Association (annual CPD required) • Third level qualifications in Sports Therapy or Physical Therapies.

High level identification of roles and specialisms within Beauty Therapy.
 Each specialism assumes a pre-requisite level 5/6 beauty qualification

Beauty Therapy Career Opportunities		High Level Description
Aesthetic Therapist (non-medical)	Skill Development:	<p>Specialises in skin care performing invasive but non-medical skin-care procedures. This role requires an advanced level of scientific and theoretical knowledge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: Principles and practices of non-medical aesthetic therapies, anatomy and physiology, skin analysis techniques, complex skin conditions, advanced techniques (injectables, peels, laser, cryolipolysis), cosmetic science, professional ethics, professional tools and equipment, product knowledge (application/benefits/contraindications), health and sterilisation, professional consultation skills, business and IT skills. • Theory & Practice: Advanced techniques (IPL, micro needling, micro-dermabrasion, dermal fillers, laser, peels, body sculpting), professional ethics, professional tools and equipment, product knowledge and client education (application/benefits/contraindications), professional consultation skills, mentoring and leadership skills.
	Pathways & Progression:	<p>A full Beauty Therapy qualification includes aesthetics as part of the curriculum. Those who choose a modular pathway graduate with a Certificate award and require 200 hours of practical experience. Further education includes specialised brand aesthetic courses, short upskilling courses, practical experience and demonstrations, self-directed on-line learning and reading.</p> <p>Progression routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist certification in advanced treatments IPL, micro-needling, skin peels or laser techniques. • Salon and spa management or lecturing/training. (Diploma holders) • Third level qualifications in aesthetic nursing or dermatology.
Nail Technician Specialism	Skill Development:	<p>Expertise in nail care and nail services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: Skin analysis, hand and foot anatomy, general skincare, hygiene and sanitation, basic and advanced nail techniques, professional tools and equipment, product knowledge (application/benefits/contraindications), professional consultation skills, marketing business and IT skills. • Theory & Practice: Skin and nail preparation and application techniques, health and hygiene.
	Pathways & Progression:	<p>Aspects of nail technologies are included in beauty therapy qualifications. This qualification is available as a short formal course to expand skill base. Many accredited programs are eligible for professional insurance so graduates can open their own salon.</p> <p>Progression routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diploma in Business Management followed by third level qualification in Business Management. • Education/Training qualifications.

High level identification of roles and specialisms within Beauty Therapy.

Each specialism assumes a pre-requisite level 5/6 beauty qualification

Beauty Therapy Career Opportunities		High Level Description
Makeup Artistry Specialism	Skill Development:	Specialises in make-up for theatre, media and fashion. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: Skin analysis, hygiene and sanitation, general skincare, cosmetic science, colour science, principles of creative make-up, special effects make-up, professional ethics, professional tools and equipment, product knowledge (application/benefits/ contra-indications), health and sanitation, professional consultation skills, marketing business and IT skills. • Theory & Practice: Skin preparation and application techniques (contouring, colour correction), media techniques (airbrushing, stencils, face and body painting, cultural influences), special effects makeup (ageing, wounds and scars), creative makeup (catwalk, TV, photoshoot). •
	Pathways & Progression:	Aspects of makeup artistry are included in beauty therapy qualifications. This qualification can serve as a short formal course to expand skill base. <p>Progression routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals can work in a variety of contexts such as theatre, TV, media, mortuary services. • Formal education options such as short upskilling courses to specialise in additional treatments/techniques
Medical Aesthetics	Skill Development:	A primary health care provider educated exclusively in the assessment, treatment and delivery of invasive medical aesthetics.
	Pathways & Progression:	A third level degree in nursing or similar medical field, membership of a professional organisation and ongoing annual CPD. <p>Progressions routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents a variety of opportunities in healthcare services

High level identification of roles and specialisms within Beauty Therapy.
 Each specialism assumes a pre-requisite level 5/6 beauty qualification

Beauty Therapy Career Opportunities		High Level Description
Chiropodist	Skill Development:	A primary health care provider educated exclusively in the assessment, treatment and prevention of foot disorders. Chiropodists provide patients with total nail and skin care, perform nail and soft tissue surgeries under local anaesthetic by injection, and prescribe and fit patients with custom foot orthotics, and orthopaedic footwear.
	Pathways & Progression:	A third level degree in podiatric medicine, membership of a professional organisation and ongoing annual CPD. Progressions routes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents a variety of opportunities in healthcare services.
Dermatologist	Skill Development:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A primary health care provider with expertise in dealing with the skin, its structure, functions, and diseases
	Pathways & Progression:	A third level degree in medicine which is recognised by the Irish Medical Council, as well as a two-year foundation programme which specialises in dermatology. Progressions routes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents a variety of opportunities in healthcare services.

Table 11: Beauty therapy career opportunities with high level job descriptions gained from interview data and web search

High level identification of roles and specialisms across Hair and Beauty Sector.

Each specialism assumes a pre-requisite level 5/6 hair or beauty qualification

Sector Wide Career Opportunities		High Level Description
Internal Quality Assessor (IVA)/ External Quality Assessor (EQA)	Skill Development:	This qualification can be supplementary to current roles or a pathway to an Education/ Training qualification. Involves assessing the skills of trainees. IQA's assess competencies and skills in-house. A separate EQA qualification increases career pathways facilitating assessment of trainees in other salons or educational settings. Evidence of annual CPD is required for these roles.
	Pathways & Progression:	A qualification and experience in the skills under assessment is required. Progression routes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 6 Train the Trainer Course, 3rd level teaching degree. Opportunities in education sector, Healthcare sector.
Trainer/ Educator	Skill Development:	Responsibilities include the creation and delivery of engaging training. The ability to motivate and inspire learners is critical. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory: Extensive knowledge and practical experience are required in products, service, consultation and customer relationships. The general industry standard is that you can train to the level you have qualified in. Consequently, an expansive professional skillset will yield more options. Theory & Practice: In addition to theoretical knowledge of products and techniques an ability to confidently deliver experiential learning is important. Knowledge of learning styles, exceptional interpersonal skills, high levels of motivation.
	Pathways & Progression:	Formal training such as an IVA (Internal Verification Assessor) or EVA (External Verification Assessor) qualification and an NFQ level 6 Train the Trainer qualification. There is an additional new requirement for a level 7 teaching qualification for teaching in a Government run agency such as the ETB. Training insurance is required for training roles. Progression routes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self employment Third level teaching qualification.
Product Distribution	Skill Development:	Employed by manufacturers to distribute product, knowledge and training to salons. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theory: Anatomy, physiology, chemistry, conditions and disorders, tools, techniques and procedures and process, business acumen, communication and presentation skills. Theory & practice: Product knowledge: expertise in the benefits and risks of products, relational skills, experience in a training role. Business acumen: Having several years industry experience will develop an understanding of the business fundamentals and processes
	Pathways & Progression:	Progression to this role requires several years industry experience, training role experience and excellent interpersonal skills. Progression routes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opportunities exist at both a regional and national level.

High level identification of roles and specialisms across Hair and Beauty Sector.
 Each specialism assumes a pre-requisite level 5/6 hair or beauty qualification

Sector Wide Career Opportunities		High Level Description
Assistant Manager/ Manager/ Owner/ Consultancy	Skill Development:	<p>Individuals with a level 6 NFQ can progress to management, marketing, education or quality roles in higher education. The nature of the business means that individuals have opportunities to craft niche areas of expertise, particularly in consultancy and business development.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: Business accounting and finance, competitive marketing, staff recruitment, retention, managing performance, self and team leadership • Theory & practice: IT skills, techniques to improve profit and sales, measuring and managing performance, staff scheduling, target setting, product/stock management, conflict management, leadership, driving staff autonomy, marketing tools.
	Pathways & Progression:	<p>There are opportunities to complete a third level degree on both a modular basis, progressing through levels 7, 8 and 9 or for enrolling in full degree programmes. 5 - 7 years industry experience is recommended for these roles.</p> <p>Progression routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management to business ownership or consultancy. • Third level formal qualifications.
Salon Receptionist	Skill Development:	<p>Being the first point of contact, is viewed as a critical position in a salon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory: IT skills, Social Media skills, customer care, health and hygiene. • Theory & practice: IT skills, Social Media skills theoretical knowledge of the services offered, scheduling skills, customer care, leadership and motivation skills.
	Pathways & Progression:	<p>Level 5/6 qualification in reception and administration.</p> <p>Progression routes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transferrable skills mean that individuals can work in a variety of contexts. • Office administration • Third level qualification in business, marketing, HRM.

Table 12: Sector wide career opportunities with high level job descriptions gained from interview data and web search

8.0 Conclusion

This research has demonstrated that there is both a clear need and a strong desire to increase professional recognition for those working in the Hair and Beauty sector in Ireland.

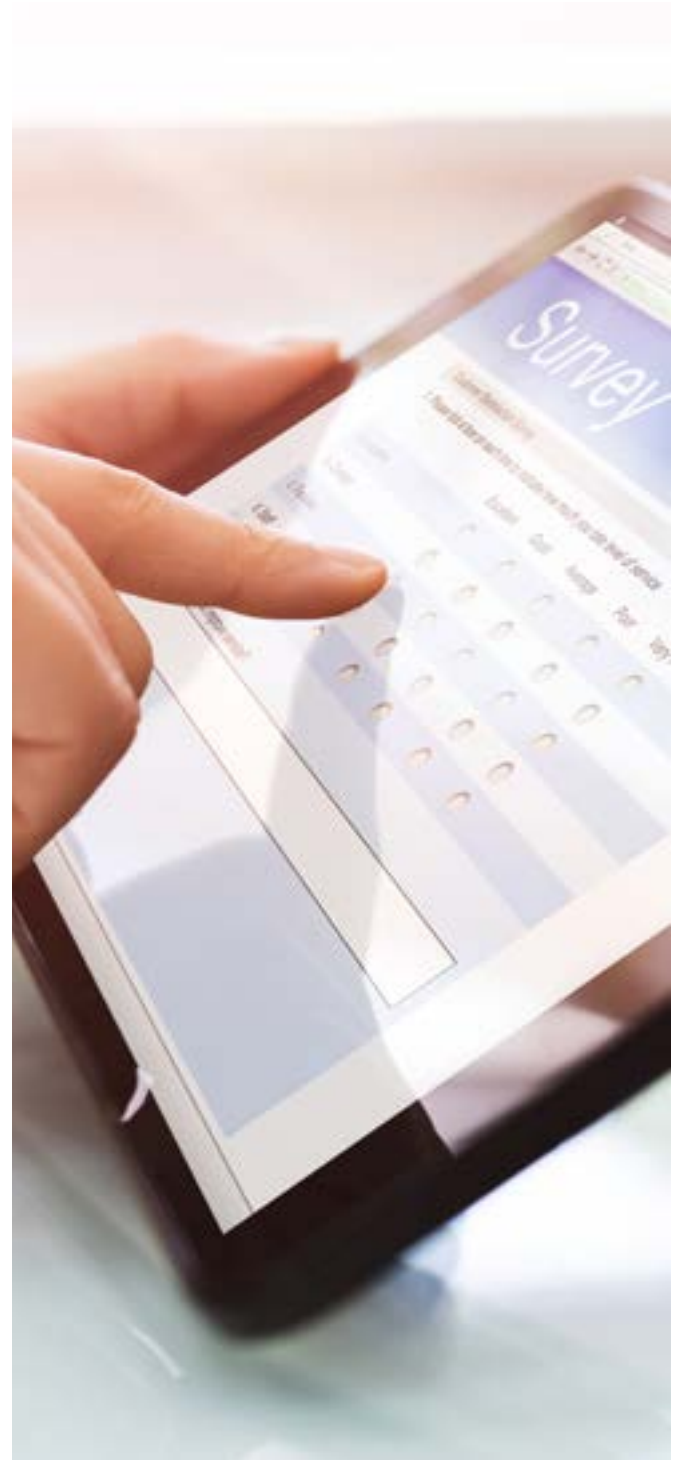
The development of a CPD framework is considered as one tool to achieve this goal. This type of mechanism is urgently required to address skill shortages, where the industry is no longer viewed as a valuable career choice. There is also an urgent requirement for this type of system to motivate professionals to address skill gaps. Finally, it is essential to recognise those who consistently engage in continuous professional development and raise professional recognition within the sector.

This research also found that the on-going lack of recognition is not just forcing individuals out of the sector to pursue an alternative career, but it is also supporting increased black-market activity. Given the polarisation and general fragmentation within the industry, it will be a challenge to gain widespread acceptance and engagement for the framework. However, it is expected that professional participation will be stimulated by taking a bottom-up approach, where the industry designs and develops the learning model. It is also anticipated that consumer support will move towards salons who provide evidence of professional practice and high-quality service. Post Covid 19, individuals reported an increase in clients who previously sought service from the black market. This was attributed to the increased sanitation measures of the salon. Consequently, this research also views a CPD framework as a tool to protect legitimate business owners, inform consumer choice and to raise health and safety standards across the sector.

Based on industry feedback this research has provided a strategy for the development and implementation of a sector wide CPD framework. The model provides a foundation for discussion, exploration and collaboration within the industry. Future research opportunities identified by this study include the development of industry specific best practices and service guidelines, the development of National Occupational Standards (NOS), the development of Digital Badges for professional recognition and Micro-credentials to facilitate progression to higher education.

This investigation began in 2019, however in the interim, the Covid 19 pandemic has created additional financial constraints for this sector, putting any plans for exploring and implementing a framework in jeopardy. It is suggested that Government support is sought for the initial set-up

and development of the framework. Given the resilience and creativity demonstrated by this sector post Covid, it is also recommended that State regulation and practitioner licensing is explored. This would provide maximum impact of the initiative and give the sector the reboot it requires for continued and sustained growth and professional recognition.



9.0 Appendices

Section 5.16 - Complete Survey Comments on the benefits of a Training Plan.

Survey Data - The Benefits of a Training Plan

Allocation of budget helps to ensure we are meeting the business needs.

By including staff in business training objectives, it allows us to move forward as a cohesive team.

By training and educating my trainees we get to get the best from them. They stay interested and motivated by their knowledge.

By upskilling my staff, they feel more confident and the clients and salon reap the rewards.

Consistent learning keeps you interested and motivated.

Clients love to see you doing courses and training. I think it makes them feel more confident and trusting.

Continuous professional development of 30+ hours per annum maintains my knowledge of new techniques and products.

Enhances my skills within the salon, enhances my teaching by helping me to give a more accurate explanation of skills. I have more confidence and heightened self-esteem. Also increases professionalism.

Training grows team members.

I do at least 5 courses a year. I find it gives me more confidence. I like to stay up to date on all the techniques and products, so I can pass this information to my clients. I love meeting fellow hairdressers and salon owners to chat about different problems.

I feel the training plan will always motivate both staff and self. It takes away barriers and meets today's aspirations. It always keeps both seniors and trainees ahead of the competition and will make sure that staff don't get bored and move to another salon. It will give staff a greater feeling of belonging in the salon and this will reflect on great creativity and thus will increase profits.

I left hairdressing for over ten years and so much has changed. I'm trying to upskill as much as I can on a tight budget. The better I get the with all new techniques the more my business is growing

I need my staff to be knowledgeable and skilful to keep the business profitable. If they don't do a satisfactory job or if they can't provide more difficult services, that is an opportunity lost for me. It helps their morale too, no one wants to remain a trainee forever.

It helps us to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each individual therapist and provide associate training/coaching accordingly.

I use a training manual for my trainees and send them on courses run by my colour supplier. The more skilled they are in the salon the better for my business and there is an increased chance of repeat custom.

It allows us to establish a shortfall in training for our employees. It allows us to train our employees in new treatments and meet the needs of our students.

It creates a focus for all team members, and also helps the team to progress onto more skilled treatments.

It gives everyone a boost when we do courses.

It helps us identify a career progression path for each individual therapist which results in more staff loyalty. Also, we can identify strengths that one person has which we can use to develop other staff members.

It sets a standard for the trainee so we all have a clear standard to uphold.

It helps with keeping up to date with all the trends and techniques that are always changing.

Continuous Professional Development within the Hair and Beauty Sector Survey – January 2020

Survey Information

Welcome!! You are invited to participate in a voluntary survey to investigate training and development opportunities within the Hairdressing and Beauty Sector in Ireland.

Image Skillnet has commissioned the Management Development Unit at the University of Limerick to carry out this industry investigation in order to identify opportunities and threats, understand skill shortages/skill gaps and boost professional recognition.

The survey is anonymous and should take a maximum of 10 minutes to complete. By continuing, you are agreeing that the University of Limerick can use your responses in this research and future academic presentations and publications about this study.

Should you agree to participate, please continue to answer all questions as comprehensively as possible until you are directed to the end of the survey. **The closing date for this survey is Friday, March 27th, 2020.**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this research, please contact:

Yvonne Delaney

Director, Management Development Unit

Kemmy Business School

University of Limerick

Tel: 061 202915

Mob. 087-9372697

Additional information on the [University of Limerick Research Ethics.pdf](#) are available if required.

Profiling the Industry 1

Are you?

- Male
- Female

What age category are you in?



What is your primary profession?

- Hairdressing
- Barbering
- Beauty

Role Profile Beauty

What is your job title?



Other position not listed

Profiling the Industry 2

Education & Industry Experience

What is the highest level of education which you have completed to date?

- Primary education
- Lower Secondary - Junior/Intermediate/Group Certificate, O Levels, GCSEs or equivalent
- Upper Secondary - Leaving Certificate (including Applied & Vocational Programmes), A levels or equivalent
- Third Level Non Degree - Technical or Vocational qualification (Certificate/Diploma), Professional Qualification (Certificate/Diploma/Masters) in Hairdressing, Barbering or Beauty
- Third level BA or BSc Degree
- Third Level MA, MBA, MEd or MSc Degree

Where did you initially receive your professional qualification or training in Hairdressing and Beauty?

- College of Further Education
- Private College
- Training Academy
- Institute of Technology
- University
- Trained in another country

- Trained on the job

How often do you participate in Industry related training and development in order to advance your career

- Several times a year
- Once a year
- Every 2 -3 years
- Every 5 years or more
- I don't participate in any further training

How long have you been working in the industry?

- Less than 1 Year
- 1 to 3 Years
- 4 to 6 Years
- 7-10 Years
- 11-14 Years
- 15+ Years

Business Type

Which of the following best describes the business where you are currently employed?

- Single Salon Business
- One of a Group or Chain of Salons
- Franchise Business
- Freelance/Mobile
- Chair renting in a Salon
- Spa

Scope of Responsibility

Select the single statement that best describes your job

- Employee at a Salon
- Employee who also supervises others at a Salon

- Owner or Manager with responsibility for budget, methods of work, policy development, personnel issues

Section 2: Beauty as a Profession

Beauty Therapy as a profession

We are interested in your opinion on beauty therapy as a profession. Please indicate your level of agreement to the following statements.

	Definitely Yes	Possibly Yes	Probably Not	Definitely Not
The current beauty qualifications and specialist courses are sufficient for professional practice within beauty therapy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is scope to develop specialist short courses which could count towards a degree in beauty therapy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Should beauty therapists require a license to practice?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Requiring a license to practice beauty therapy would increase quality standards	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Requiring a license to practice beauty therapy would increase professional recognition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Requiring a license to practice beauty therapy would protect consumers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Name one perk of your role

Section 3: CPD Experiences

This section is looking for your experiences and views of training and development

In your workplace is ongoing training and development compulsory or optional?

- Compulsory
 Optional

Do you like to receive a certificate for training and development?

- Yes, I want a certificate
 No, a certificate is not necessary
 I have no preference

Please indicate the types of training and development **you have undertaken** in the past 12 months. (Select all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attended practical course/workshop | <input type="checkbox"/> Read industry related blogs/online content |
| <input type="checkbox"/> In-house practical demonstration | <input type="checkbox"/> Attended a professional conference |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Safety regulation training/event | <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturer training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read industry related printed material | <input type="checkbox"/> Attended health and well-being training/event |

Please indicate the types of training and development **you would like to participate in** over the next 12 months. (Select all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attend practical course/workshop | <input type="checkbox"/> Read industry related blogs/online content |
| <input type="checkbox"/> In-house practical demonstration | <input type="checkbox"/> Attend a professional conference |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Safety regulation training/event | <input type="checkbox"/> Attend manufacturer training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Read industry related printed material | <input type="checkbox"/> Attend a health and well-being event |

How could training and development opportunities be improved? (select all that apply)

- More practical courses/workshops
 More opportunities to learn from other peers/mentors
 More online training courses
 More online podcasts and articles
 More manufacturer lec training
 More professional conferences/seminars

Please tell us how ongoing training and development personally benefits you? (Select all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increased productivity at work | <input type="checkbox"/> Increased promotion prospects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lifestyle, health & well-being gains | <input type="checkbox"/> Enhanced professional recognition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increased confidence with skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Increased financial reward |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increased job satisfactor | <input type="checkbox"/> I see no benefits to ongoing training and development |

Do any of the following **barriers** make ongoing training and development difficult? (Select all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Location and distance to training | <input type="checkbox"/> Subjects/topics too specialized |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of time | <input type="checkbox"/> I experience no career advancement for additional training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cost | <input type="checkbox"/> I experience no financial reward for additional training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Uninteresting subjects or topics | <input type="checkbox"/> I experience no barriers |

Would you like a system which awards points for participati^on in training/development? (similar to grocery store points system)

- Yes
- No
- Possibly

How likely would you be to register and collect points/credits for relevant events/training?

- Definitely
- Possibly
- Uncertain
- Definitely Not

Would you be willing to pay a small annual subscription fee to an organisation to manage your points/credits

- Definitely
- Possibly

- Uncertain
- Definitely Not

Should employee registration with a points system be compulsory or optional?

- Compulsory
- Optional
- Not Sure

Please indicate your association with the following

Member of a professional body	Member of a local professional support group	Member of a regional professional support group	Not associated with any group
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 4: Management Views

Owners & Managers

In this section we are looking for your unique views as a supervisor, manager or owner

Select the **top three drivers of change** influencing the Industry you are in?

- Technology - new electrical products within the industry
- Social Media
- Increased consumer expectations
- Increased Investment from manufacturers (e.g. Wella, L'Oréal)
- Increase in larger companies and franchises
- Increase in learning providers
- New entrant expectations (training, career paths, flexible working hours)
- Influence of professional associations (-abic, Image Skillnet etc.)

Other main driver not listed

Select the **top three issues or challenges** facing the -hairdressing and Beauty industry?

- Skill Shortages
- Lack of training providers

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Skill Gaps | <input type="checkbox"/> Standard of training provided |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Competition from the black market | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of professional recognition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Increased consumer expectations | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of regulation within the industry |

Other issue or challenge not listed

Is there a gap between the skills of your current employees and the skills your business needs to meet client demand?

- Yes
 No

Where are the greatest skill gaps within your business? (Drag and Drop to Rank 1 to 5, where 1 is largest skill gap and 5 is smallest)

- Technical Skills
- Communication Skills
- Retail Skills
- Health and Safety Knowledge
- Business Knowledge

Do you think that a recognition system which awards and records training would address these gaps?

- Definitely Yes
 Possibly Yes
 Probably Not
 Definitely Not

We are interested in your opinion on the following statements related to skills. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The pace of technology will exceed the pace of available training opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demand for advanced treatments require immediate training/development courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are sufficient training providers at present to meet the current and future needs of the sector	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increasing consumer expectations require more training in people skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Newly qualified entrants have clear professional expectations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Regulating the Industry would help to establish industry standards	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Requiring a license to practice would increase industry credibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Briefly comment on your views:

List **one improvement** you would like to see in training provision

Do you have a training budget?

- Yes
- No

Do you have a training plan?

- Yes
 No

We are interested in hearing more about your training plan. Can you please answer these final two questions.

Please explain how your training plan helps your business? (max. 500 words)

Please explain how your training plan keeps you ahead of the competition? (max. 500 words)

Role Profile Barbering

What is your job title?



Other position not listed

Section 2: Barbering as a profession

Barbering as a profession

We are interested in your opinion on barbering as a profession. Please indicate your level of agreement to the following statements.

	Definitely Yes	Possibly Yes	Probably Not	Definitely Not
The current qualifications combined with specialist courses are sufficient for professional practice within barbering	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is scope to develop specialist short courses which could count towards a degree in barbering	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Should barbers require a license to practice?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Requiring a license to practice barbering would increase quality standards	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Requiring a license to practice barbering would increase professional recognition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Requiring a license to practice barbering would protect consumers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Name one perk of your role				
Pilot Survey Comments				
Role Profile HairdresIng				
What is your job title				
Salon Manager <input type="button" value="v"/>				
Other position not listed				

Hairdressing as a profession

We are interested in your opinion on hairdressing as a profession. Please indicate your level of agreement to the following statements.

	Definitely Yes	Possibly Yes	Probably Not	Definitely Not
The current qualifications combined with specialist courses are sufficient for professional practice within hairdressing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is scope to develop specialist short courses which could count towards a degree in hairdressing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Should hairdressers require a license to practice?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Requiring a license to practice hairdressing would increase quality standards	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Requiring a license to practice hairdressing would increase professional recognition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Requiring a license to practice hairdressing would protect consumers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Name one perk of your role





A top-down view of a desk with a laptop, a clipboard with charts, and sticky notes. The laptop is in the foreground, showing the keyboard. The clipboard is in the middle ground, featuring several pie charts and yellow sticky notes. A hand is visible in the top left corner, holding a pen. The background is slightly blurred, showing a person's hands and a pair of glasses.

This research highlights how the absence of a CPD framework adversely impacts the industry and identifies the benefits of implementing a formal framework.



IMAGE Skillnet
The Enterprise Centre,
Hill Road, Drumshanbo,
Co Leitrim, N41 Y1F6

t: 0719640438
t: 0719640439
e: info@imageskillnet.ie



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An Roinn Breisoideachais agus Ardoideachais,
Taighde, Nuálaíochta agus Eolaíochta
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