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## PRESS RELEASE

### Synergy Learning committed to getting IT right for women

Synergy Learning, Hollywood, is the latest company committing to recruit more women through the Equality Commission's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) charter and improve the gender balance in its workplace.



Synergy Learning is a leading global provider of open-source Learning Management System solutions for commercial, educational and public organisations. ICT is a traditionally male-dominated industry, but Synergy Learning has 29% female representation among its staff compared to an industry average of 16-17%, although that drops to 14% when non-technology based roles are not included.

Chief Executive Officer Roy Kerley says: "We are passionate about becoming an exemplar employer in terms of diversity and equality of opportunity. Therefore, I am delighted to have signed up to the STEM Charter to promote careers in our industry to women and girls. While we will absolutely always recruit and promote on merit alone, ie, the best person will be offered the job, we are keen to get involved in initiatives to promote careers and attract women into the industry. It makes sense for the economy, for our own equality and diversity and aligns with our shared values. The sky is the limit and in terms of career progression, gender is irrelevant. We just want individuals with drive and enthusiasm."

The Equality Commission initiative aims to raise the profile of women in STEM industries, highlighting their successes and providing a forum for them to meet others in similar roles through events.

Dr Evelyn Collins, Chief Executive of the Equality Commission, said: "We find it really encouraging that businesses such as Synergy Learning are making this voluntary commitment to support and encourage women in their industry."

"Opportunities for women to work and succeed in all industries are better now than at any time in the past, and women with the right qualifications and experience can now

enter careers which were previously male preserves. Support and encouragement to female staff are crucial to ensure they feel comfortable and able to carry out both their family and child-rearing responsibilities as well as their work responsibilities.

“I think that women will increasingly take up STEM careers when they see role models and we’re delighted that Synergy has provided us with the excellent example of Senior Designer Caroline Kennedy as one of our series of case studies involving women already working in STEM.”

Dr Collins went on to say that encouraging more women into such roles could have a positive impact on Northern Ireland’s future prosperity and growth. “It’s vital that bright girls and women with an aptitude for STEM subjects are inspired to see careers in the sector as an attractive option,” she added, “and that’s why liaison with schools and colleges, including offering high quality internships as Synergy Learning does, is so important.”

The last word goes to Synergy Learning’s Caroline Kennedy, who joined the company nine years ago through the internship scheme. “I’ve benefited from the ethos of the company, which sees learning and development as key for all employees equally. And I feel supported by the company’s approach to work life balance, flexible working patterns and, for working parents, child care vouchers. I feel valued and encouraged and able to give my very best at work.”

For details on how your company can get involved go to: [www.equalityni.org/STEM](http://www.equalityni.org/STEM)