North East coalition building regions technology skills

One Digital Collective (One DC) is a regional initiative that has been created to bring together contributors and collaborators from business, academia and public sector agencies. If you are based in the Northeast and interested in upskilling your staff in coding, read on!

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The challenge

The programme has been designed specifically to meet the needs of employers, and can be evolved over time. The programme aims to provide people in the North East UK with an understanding of the unique opportunities that can be unlocked by improving digital skills and filling open roles in the region. The benefits of filling the 67,000 open digital roles in the North East with members of the local population are improved living wages, standards of education and higher levels of digital literacy in the region. It is important to ensure that digital skills are prevalent in every region of the country if the UK is to go for growth.

Ruth Harrison, founder of One DC, identified the shortage of available talent in 2021 when several large technology companies launched in Newcastle simultaneously. The challenge of skills shortages was compounding salary inflation across the region as

everyone was sourcing from the same small talent pool. To address this, we needed to increase the size of the talent pool and open up the technology industry to a whole new potential pipeline of emerging capability.

The solution

One DC will be a 13-week programme designed to train students in basic coding skills. One DC has started with a pilot project running from January to March 2023. It is expected that within 36 months, One DC will have trained circa 50,000 people in entry level coding skills in the North East region, with the sole purpose of securing employment in the region's tech sector, supporting the growth of the local digital economy. The programme is particularly aimed at applicants looking to upskill and transfer from non-technology sectors into a digital career and is open to all.

One DC comprises a representative cross-section of small, medium and large local business executives including national organisations headquartered in the North East region along with senior leaders from Newcastle College and the Digital Industries curriculum team.

The approach

The five criteria for success as set out by the One DC is a solution that provides:

1. Sourcing candidates - that include all socio-demographics in the region.
2. Course content - that meets the ongoing needs of employers.
3. Addressing teacher shortage - that deploys a unique model to build teacher numbers in line with increasing student numbers.
4. Work experience - that provides hands on development that reduces hiring risk for employers.
5. Interview readiness - that provides a level of preparedness for new entrants to the workforce.

One DC has been set up to enable a unique level of industry engagement and input into the design and delivery of the North East region's digital curriculum to ensure the

availability of excellent education for citizens which fully meets the future employment needs of the local digital business community.

Collaboration is key to ensuring you have a solution that meets the needs of employer requirements and student aspirations. Working closely with Newcastle College has provided a unique opportunity to continuously evolve the curriculum content and maintain high levels of academic rigour - the initial course provides students with [CertCE Software Engineering Level 4](#) which is 60 credits towards a degree.

Get involved

If your business is based in the North East, watch this space to find out more about how to get

involved with One DC. If you represent a region in the UK who is interested in unlocking digital value, optimising citizen prosperity in your region and filling the digital skills gap to meet the needs of

business - get in touch to see how One DC can help:
http://www.onedigitalcollective.com/

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