

The Open University and the Institute of Coding launch free Cyber and AI courses for young people

UNITED KINGDOM, December 20, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Institute of Coding and The Open University have announced a new collaboration to offer free Cyber, Coding and AI courses to over 6,000 18-30-year-olds.

By the end of this year there are expected to be three million new tech jobs in the UK with 60 percent of employers anticipating a greater need for advanced digital skills, highlighting an urgent need to upskill the UK's workforce .

Click Start with The Open University, funded by Nominet, will combine the university's educational expertise with real-world insights from employers.

It's designed to equip young adults with the knowledge and support needed to kickstart a digital career, progress in their current role, or secure their dream job.

The programme will target young people across the four nations of the UK who are experiencing light barriers to participation. This includes those from underrepresented backgrounds, facing social mobility barriers such as living in low-income households or under resourced areas, or lacking the opportunities, personal skills, or confidence to enter employment.

The programme offers courses requiring no previous experience, such as Cyber Foundations and Getting Started with Generative AI. Learners can then advance their skills further with the Cisco Certified Support Technician Cyber Security and the PCEP Certified Entry Level Python Programmer courses, which align with internationally recognised entry-level industry certifications.

Learners earn digital badges as they move through the courses, which demonstrate their accomplishments to employers and learners will be able to hear directly from employers about their current job vacancies with regular webinars taking place from experts, employers, and career coaches.

The programme will also offer employability-related resources and courses to support those applying for jobs, such as CV writing and interview skills as well as key skills such as team working and communication.

The programme will be delivered via Click Start, a nationwide training programme developed by the Institute of Coding and funded by public benefit company and guardians of the .UK web domain, Nominet, to equip individuals with the skills they need for the digital workplace.

Rachid Hourizi, Director of the Institute of Coding, said: "AI and broader digital skills are becoming increasingly important to the wider economy and a digitally skilled workforce is vital to unlock economic growth. The Institute of Coding is committed to ensuring that those who want to pursue a tech-based career have the skills needed to flourish and embrace the opportunities a digital economy offers.'

"The Open University is a true pioneer of higher education, and we're delighted to partner with them on these new courses to ensure learners have the support they need to apply for the jobs - and further education opportunities - they want."

Jane Dickinson, Digital Skills Lead at The Open University said: "At the Open University, our mission is to ensure everyone can access high quality education regardless of where they are and pursue their career ambitions.'

"The UK faces a digital skills shortage, and the younger generation is not exempt. By reaching over 6,000 18-25-year-olds through the Institute of Coding's Click Start programme, we will boost digital skills and bring new talent into the UK economy."

David Carroll, Chief Customer Officer at Nominet said: ""With the growing digital skills gap in the UK, having cyber and AI skills isn't just a bonus – it's a must. These skills help the nation's organisations protect their data, work more efficiently, and innovate.

"The Open University's amazing programme is designed to meet the needs of people from all walks of life, helping them step into digital careers. This not only helps learners move up the career ladder and land better-paying jobs, but by building a workforce skilled in cybersecurity and AI, we're shaping a secure and prosperous future for the UK."

Caroline Lott
Higginson Strategy
[email us here](#)

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