

# 50 South Africans achieve international digital skills certification

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*International digital skills certificates awarded; new Executive AI, Digital Transformation and Digital Marketing courses to be launched in SA in 2020*



*Paul Dunne, Digital Skills Global Founder and CEO and Heather Humphreys TD, Ireland's Minister for Business, Enterprise, and Innovation pictured alongside some of the recent South African graduates of the Professional Certificate programme certified by the Global Leadership Institute at Boston College and delivered in collaboration with Digital Skills Global.*

Up to 50 South African business and ICT professionals were presented with certificates of competency at an award ceremony in Sandton. The ceremony substantiated the skills and competencies obtained through an industry-leading Professional Certificate programme certified by the Global Leadership Institute at Boston College and delivered in collaboration with Digital Skills Global (formerly Digital Skills Academy). The South Africans now hold internationally-recognised Professional Certificates from the Boston College Global Leadership Institute in key fields including Mobile Development, Web Programming, Data Science, Big Data Visualisation, Digital Business Analysis, Data Analytics, Behavioral Economics, Digital Project Management, Digital Marketing and Digital Product Management.

The Professional Certificates in digital skills are certified by Boston College, which is ranked among the top 1% of universities worldwide, and the programmes are delivered in collaboration with Digital Skills Global in line with a partnership announced last year. The digital skills programmes are designed to rapidly transform the digital competencies of corporate workforces, enabling them to master in-demand digital skills through a combination of coaching by industry experts and project-based experience gained by working in international cross-function teams to solve real business challenges.

Digital Skills Global CEO Paul Dunne says this model accelerates learning, positioning participants to rapidly gain the necessary digital leadership competencies and emerging technology skills to help drive digital transformation in their organisations.

“Digital Skills Global has grown rapidly since its launch in Ireland in 2008, supporting online programmes in digital skills to Working Professionals from 33 countries, across six continents. Our leading edge programmes have been exceptionally well received in South Africa, where high-end digital skills shortages could slow digital transformation. To overcome the

skills challenge, Digital Skills Global works with official local Corporate Partners such as MultiChoice, MTN South Africa, Standard Bank and Absa, both to train their professionals and to give participants an opportunity to work on digital innovation projects within their organisations,” says Dunne.

Officiating at the ceremony, Heather Humphreys TD, Ireland’s Minister for Business, Enterprise, and Innovation, said: “Here we have an innovative Irish enterprise - DSG, working with a leading US university - Boston College, to connect with talented professionals from leading corporations in South Africa and supporting their drive to be truly world-class digital businesses. This really is a wonderful partnership that serves as an example for others to follow. This project demonstrates the global power of innovative online education.”

Johan Viljoen, Head of Channel Design – Africa Regional Office at Absa Retail and Business Bank, has not only completed the Boston College Global Leadership Institute Computational Thinking & Behavioral Economics course, he has also been instrumental in making the Digital Skills Global - Boston College partnership one of the bank’s preferred service providers for digital skills training. Staff across the nine countries where Viljoen heads up channel design divisions can now register via the bank’s staff portal for eight of the Boston College professional digital skills courses. Discussions are also underway for customised practical training modules to be offered to bank staff, which would simultaneously upskill staff and support faster prototype development for the bank.

Viljoen says he chose the Boston College Global Leadership Institute course because it is internationally recognised, and because the virtual learning model accommodates busy corporate schedules. “I wanted to brush up on my knowledge and expand my repertoire, but many courses are classroom-based and require you to be away from the office or attend at night or on weekends. The virtual model works very well, with working on the theoretical component in the first three months preparing you well for the three months’ practical collaboration with participants around the world.” Viljoen has enrolled for further training next year, and expects up to 150 of his colleagues across Africa to take advantage of the opportunity to do so too.

Kugan Pillay, who oversees teams implementing digital platforms for Standard Bank across Africa, completed the Boston College Global Leadership Institute Computational Thinking & Behavioral Economics course. He says the training has significantly improved his ability to lead teams working to innovate and improve customer experience on digital platforms. “The training is very practical, and I worked with a multinational team designing an app to support smart fridges. The experience I gained has helped me solve for customer experience faster and more effectively, and has improved my capabilities to lead teams such as our user interface team,” he says.

Dayne Dillon, Senior Manager Data Governance at MTN, completed the Data Science course to support his work on the development and expansion of data governance and data monetisation within MTN. “The course content was a good fit for the work I am currently doing, and the fact that the certificate is internationally recognised was a big plus,” he says. “Overall, it was a very good experience, the course was well managed and the information was very relevant and helpful. Working with participants in other countries helped us to think beyond the South African market and the knowledge gained has definitely helped in my day to day work.”

He notes that the online learning model is well suited to busy professionals: “I could plan my studies around my work day, which was beneficial.”

Dunne announced that in 2020, the Boston College Global Leadership Institute and Digital Skills Global will launch additional Executive Certificate programmes, including: Digital Product Leadership, Digital Ecosystems Strategies, Design Thinking for Business Professionals and Digital Business Ethics. Other topics to be covered in 2020 include AI Applications, Digital Transformation, AI for Business Professionals and Digital Marketing Strategies.

### **About Digital Skills Global (DSG)**

Digital Skills Global (DSG) partners with the world’s leading universities to rapidly transform the digital competencies of corporate workforces. Through flexible online and part-time programmes, DSG works with organisations to transform their

talent into digital leaders with the competencies, skills and mindsets to drive digital transformation and accelerate business growth.



**Digital  
Skills**  
Global

DSG (formerly Digital Skills Academy), has supported online programmes in digital skills delivered to Working Professionals from 33 countries, across six continents. Participants in these programmes come from companies like ABSA, Accenture, Barclays, UBS, Credit Suisse, Prudential, EY, Deloitte, Dell EMC, MTN, Multichoice, SAP, Standard Bank and Oracle.

For further course information visit <https://digitalskillsglobal.com/>.

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