

CREATOR SKILLS: Progression, Provision & Priorities

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1. Executive Summary

1.1. Study Scope and Approach

ScreenSkills and the BBC commissioned global Creative Industries consultancy, Olsberg•SPI (SPI), to examine the UK's rapidly evolving Digital Content Creator (DCC) sector.¹ SPI engaged with DCCs and stakeholders across the UK industry to assess the skills landscape for DCCs, and understand what they want and need to accelerate growth. The research explores the skills, opportunities and challenges affecting DCCs as creative entrepreneurs, including how DCC skills overlap with, and differ from, film and television sector skills.

The study findings and recommendations inform how the film and television sector organisations, including the BBC and ScreenSkills, as well as DCC sector organisations and government can act as supporting partners, helping DCCs across the UK Nations and Regions to further progress, scale and build sustainable businesses, as well as enabling cross-sector transition for DCCs into film and television work and film and television professionals into digital-first production².

The report combines insights from existing research, consultations with 21 DCC and screen sector professionals, and a survey of 20 UK-based DCCs. This research informed a Skills Taxonomy and three case studies. As a result, the report's findings, conclusions, and recommendations are grounded in the experiences, priorities, and realities of DCCs.

As the DCC sector is still emerging, this study provides an initial exploration and a foundation for further research and analysis.

SPI would like to thank the consultees who took part in this study, as well as the collaboration with the BBC and ScreenSkills in its development.

1.2. Summary of Key Findings

SPI's research uncovered a set of key findings, explored further in Sections 3, 4 and 5:

- There is not a single type of DCC; while many operate as solo entrepreneurs, a growing number have scaled into multi-person businesses or digital-first production companies
- For many DCCs, success means maintaining autonomy and scaling a digital-first business; for others, crossing into film and television work – mainly on screen or in more collaborative creative roles – can either be a key goal, or one part of a broader entrepreneurial pathway, including building a personal brand, establishing brand partnerships or developing IP across digital and traditional content platforms
- DCCs require a range of creative, business, technical and transversal skills to succeed. While technical production skills such as video recording and editing are fundamental, platform literacy, storytelling, two-way communication with audiences and resilience are critical skills setting successful DCCs apart
- The strongest skills crossover with film and television is in ideation, storytelling, presenting, directing, production planning, filming and editing, but DCC work also requires distinct platform literacy, audience analytics, community engagement, as well as more fast-paced and experimental workflows

¹ A Digital Content Creator is a professional who supports the development of written and audiovisual content for video-sharing platforms

² Digital-first production refers to the creation of content for digital video-sharing platforms such as YouTube, TikTok and Instagram

- Legal, IP, financial and employment-management capabilities become more important as DCCs scale, particularly when they enter commercial partnerships, hire teams, protect their original formats or move between digital-first and legacy media environments
- Many DCCs develop through self-directed practice, peer learning and mentoring rather than formal routes, reflecting the fast-paced nature of the sector, where practical iteration and real-time audience feedback are central to skills development. Low or no incomes for early-career DCCs and lack of access to skills funding also drives a preference for informal over formal training
- Digital platforms lower geographical barriers to starting a DCC career across the UK's Nations and Regions, but access to networks, events and film and television entry pathways can still be skewed towards London and other major cities such as Manchester, requiring DCCs based elsewhere to travel for opportunities, which can be time- or cost-prohibitive
- Online safety, harassment, isolation and wellbeing pressures are major challenges in sustaining DCC careers, especially when audience growth occurs rapidly without appropriate support structures.

1.3. Summary of Recommendations

The study provides key recommendations to address the opportunities and challenges highlighted in the research findings. Film and television organisations such as ScreenSkills and the BBC, DCC sector organisations including professional bodies and video sharing platforms, the Digital Creator All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) and the UK government's anticipated Creative Freelance Champion are encouraged

to play a role in addressing and supporting the following objectives, further detailed in [Section 6:](#)

- 1. Support DCCs to scale and create sustainable business models:** DCCs require entrepreneurial skills, especially to scale. Providing access to leadership and management training and resources would enable DCCs to build sustainable businesses, whether they are solo entrepreneurs or part of wider teams
- 2. Build stronger DCC networks & cross-sector integration between DCC and film and television:** DCCs upskill through peer-learning and mentoring. In addition, both the DCC and film and television sectors have valuable learnings to offer each other. Dedicated forums and (paid) opportunities can facilitate UK-wide DCC and cross-sector skills exchange
- 3. Prioritise safeguarding and wellbeing training:** DCCs face major risks around online safety and wellbeing. Creating topical toolkits for DCCs and widening access to enabling tools, support and specialist advice would enable them to mitigate these risks
- 4. Improve navigation of DCC learning provision by curating trusted resources:** Many DCC learning resources already exist. Creating a navigable repository of kitemarked resources, aligned to the taxonomy and DCC categories and informed by sector feedback, would help DCCs to use these most effectively
- 5. Develop the DCC skills base through accredited, modular micro-credentials:** Formal training provision is seen as often too slow moving and generic. Relevant skills and training bodies can support DCCs in developing a wide range of skills through a practical, agile and sector relevant micro-credentials framework, developed in consultation with DCCs and sector representatives.

2. Introduction

2.1. Study Background and Context

In January 2026, ScreenSkills and the BBC commissioned global Creative Industries consultancy, Olsberg•SPI (SPI), to conduct research into the rapidly evolving Digital Content Creator (DCC) sector, with a particular focus on the skills and support to aid DCCs in progressing, scaling and sustaining entrepreneurial careers across the UK's Nations and Regions.

The study was conducted against a backdrop of significant change across both industry and public policy. In 2025, skills policy rose further up the UK Government agenda, with Skills England publishing sector evidence and skills-needs assessments for 10 priority sectors, including the Creative Industries and Digital and Technologies.³ Further, as outlined in the Creative Industries Sector Plan,⁴ the devolved UK Nations have also developed their own skills strategies. In Wales, the Welsh Government's Creative Skills Action Plan and fund support training, upskilling, and wellbeing in the Creative Industries. In Northern Ireland, the Northern Ireland Executive and Northern Ireland Screen support production, skills, and education through Moving Image Arts GCSE and A-Level qualifications and the Irish Language and Ulster-Scots Broadcast Funds. In Scotland, the

Scottish Government supports the sector through Creative Scotland, the Skills Investment Plan for Scotland's Creative Industries Sector, and the Creative Industries Leadership Group.

The DCC sector has gained increasing cultural and commercial relevance within the Creative Industries. UK audiences are embracing online media activities and digital content – according to Ofcom's *Media Nations 2025* report, YouTube is the second-most watched platform in the UK, and three of the top five media activities by monthly reach are mainly online, with social media being used by 84% of adults.⁵ The pattern is even stronger among younger audiences; each month, social media (excluding YouTube) reaches 94% of 15 to 24-year-olds.⁶

The DCC sector is also a substantial and impactful part of the UK and global screen and media economy:

£2.2bn

YouTube's creative ecosystem alone contributed more than £2.2 billion to UK GDP, a conservative read on the wider DCC sector.⁷

³ *Assessment of priority skills to 2030*. Skills England, 5th November 2025. Accessible at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/assessment-of-priority-skills-to-2030/assessment-of-priority-skills-to-2030>

⁴ *Creative Industries Sector Plan*. UK Government, 23rd June 2025. Accessible at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/creative-industries-sector-plan>

⁵ *Media Nations UK 2025*. Ofcom, 30th July 2025. Accessible at: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/siteassets/resources/documents/research-and-data/multi-sector/media-nations/2025/media-nations-2025-uk-report.pdf?v=401287>

⁶ *Ibid*

⁷ *Exploring YouTube's UK impact in 2024*. YouTube, September 2025. Accessible at: https://www.youtube.com/intl/ALL_uk/howyoutubeworks/youtubes-impact/

45,000+

*Full-time equivalent jobs supported in the UK by YouTube's creative ecosystem in 2024.*⁸

US \$480bn

*Projected size of the global creator economy by 2027, reflecting broader international DCC-led growth.*⁹

There is also growing convergence between the film and television sector and the DCC sector, with traditional screen sector organisations recognising the significant strategic importance of digital content in affecting how UK audiences, especially younger people, engage with entertainment, commentary, identity and public culture.

Public service broadcasters, Channel 4,¹⁰ ITV,¹¹ and most recently, the BBC,¹² have created strategic partnerships with YouTube to distribute content through the video-sharing platform, as

well as create new digital-first content, particularly targeted at younger audiences.

The BBC's strategic partnership with YouTube includes the launch of a new DCC skills and training programme to upskill and partner with DCCs and established television producers at the BBC's hubs across the UK, an initial signal of how the BBC is seeking to do more in this space. In 2022, Channel 4 launched Channel 4.0, its DCC-led, digital-first label,¹³ while ITV launched a digital content label, Zoo55, in 2025.¹⁴

Video-sharing platforms such as YouTube, TikTok and Twitch are also changing talent discovery – one example includes the Northern Irish stars of the BBC Three show *Funboys* (2025), who were discovered through the content on their YouTube channel, SuperLemon.¹⁵

Beyond the broadcasters, streamers have also recognised the value of DCCs and their audiences. UK YouTuber collective the Sidemen's *Inside* (2024 - present) has evolved from a YouTube hit into a Netflix series, demonstrating how DCC talent and formats are increasingly feeding into mainstream media content.¹⁶

⁸ Ibid

⁹ The creator economy could approach half-a-trillion dollars by 2027. Goldman Sachs, 19th April 2023. Accessible at: <https://www.goldmansachs.com/insights/articles/the-creator-economy-could-approach-half-a-trillion-dollars-by-2027>

¹⁰ Channel 4 and YouTube strike pioneering content and commercial partnership. Channel 4, 11th May 2022. Accessible at: <https://www.channel4.com/press/news/channel-4-and-youtube-strike-pioneering-content-and-commercial-partnership>

¹¹ ITV and YouTube Announce New Partnership. ITV, 13th December 2024. Accessible at: <https://www.itv.com/presscentre/media-releases/itv-and-youtube-announce-new-partnership>

¹² BBC to make shows for YouTube in landmark new deal. BBC, 21st January 2026. Accessible at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c0q4521pg28o>

¹³ Channel 4 launches all-new digital-first brand, Channel 4.0. Channel 4, 19th October 2022. Accessible at: <https://www.channel4.com/press/news/channel-4-launches-all-new-digital-first-brand-channel-40>

¹⁴ ITV Studios to launch Zoo 55 propelling the business to the forefront of digital content exploitation. ITV 21st October 2024. Accessible at: <https://www.itv.com/presscentre/media-releases/itv-studios-launch-zoo-55-propelling-business-forefront-digital-content-exploitation>

¹⁵ BBC's Funboys are taking the Northern Irish culture boom in a fresh, weird direction. GQ, 13th February 2025. Accessible at: <https://www.gq-magazine.co.uk/article/funboys-bbc>

¹⁶ The Sidemen's YouTube Reality Series Switches to Netflix. Deadline, 21st November 2024. Accessible at: [https://deadline.com/2024/11/netflix-sidemen-youtube-series-inside-1236182377/#:~:text=The%20streamer%20has%20greenlit%20a,%C2%A31m%20\(\\$1.26M\)](https://deadline.com/2024/11/netflix-sidemen-youtube-series-inside-1236182377/#:~:text=The%20streamer%20has%20greenlit%20a,%C2%A31m%20($1.26M))

As economic impact, audience reach, and cultural influence have grown, the UK DCC economy has evolved and matured, and so has institutional recognition of the sector. In October 2025, the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Digital Creators was first registered, with the stated purpose of championing the DCC economy and advocating for DCCs as a profession; its joint secretariat is provided by the Digital Creators Association (DCA) and the Influencer Marketing Trade Body (IMTB).

The DCA is the UK's first professional trade body for DCCs, whilst the IMTB is a membership organisation focused on building a more robust and sustainable influencer marketing industry, including through best-practice and compliance activity.¹⁷ In April 2026, the Office for National Statistics introduced a designated Standard Industrial Classification code for DCCs (SIC code 59.112),¹⁸ marking a significant shift in the formal recognition of DCC businesses and removing barriers for company registration, lending and government support. These developments point to the increasing legitimisation of and structural support for the DCC sector.

Despite the success that DCCs have been able to achieve as creative entrepreneurs, evidence also points to challenges in the DCC workforce.

YouTube's Creator Consultation found that only 17% of surveyed respondents believed UK DCCs received adequate support for training and skills development.¹⁹ At the same time, recent research by ScreenSkills has found that while the film and television workforce has increased, production roles have decreased, resulting in an underutilisation of the workforce.²⁰

Although success in pivoting to the DCC sector is not guaranteed, given the relative leanness of digital production crews, riskier business models and the competitiveness of digital content, film and television professionals can adapt and build new skills to capitalise on digital-first production opportunities. Alongside Skills England's identification of ongoing shortages, rising demand for hybrid "createch" capabilities, and gaps in provision, this underlines the need to map the DCC skills landscape and better understand its relationship to the wider screen workforce.

2.2. Study Methodology

The study's approach was grounded by a series of guiding research questions within a Research Framework (Figure 1). Each research question was paired with a methodology input, which indicates which questions have been addressed by the supporting evidence.

¹⁷ Digital Creators APPG. *Parallel Parliament*, 20th October 2025. Accessible at: <https://www.parallelparliament.co.uk/APPG/digital-creators>

¹⁸ DCMS accepts call to recognise creator-led businesses within official figures. IMTB, April 21st, 2026. Accessible at: <https://imtb.org.uk/ons-publishes-revised-sic-2026-framework-influencer-content-creator/>

¹⁹ YouTube calls for greater recognition and support for creator economy, backed by nearly 10,000 creators. YouTube, 1st July 2025. Accessible at: <https://blog.youtube/inside-youtube/uk-creator-consultation-report/>

²⁰ Powering Production: Identifying skills needs in the UK's screen industry. ScreenSkills, April 2026. Accessible at: <https://www.screenskills.com/media/vvrbc3e/powering-production-april-2026.pdf>

Figure 1 – Study's Guiding Research Questions

RESEARCH QUESTIONS		DESK RESEARCH	CONSULTATIONS	SURVEY	CASE STUDIES	SKILLS TAXONOMY
1	What skills are useful for DCCs to have, and are there any critical skills gaps?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	How do the skills for DCCs align and overlap with traditional screen sector skills?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	How can broadcasters, film/television production companies, streamers etc. help to fill these gaps, including in partnership with others?		✓			
4	What are the career opportunities and challenges for DCCs?	✓	✓	✓	✓	
5	What are the barriers to building or maintaining a career in digital content creation and what does success look like?	✓	✓	✓	✓	
6	What does career progression look like for DCCs?		✓	✓	✓	
7	How well does existing training and education provision align with the skill sets of DCCs?		✓	✓		
8	How accessible are DCC careers across the UK Nations and Regions?		✓	✓		

2.2.1. Desk Research

SPI reviewed a series of existing research on skills and training within the DCC sector. Topics included:

- **Existing research** on DCCs, including definitions of the sector and existing taxonomies
- **Existing training, interventions and policy** related to DCCs in the UK, and how this has evolved in recent years
- **Research and examples of interventions globally** that could benefit the UK context
- **Skills specialisms, gaps, challenges and needs** required for sector development, including how these overlapped with or diverged from traditional screen sectors
- **Media reporting and opinion** about DCCs and the DCC sector in the UK.

Given the limited research on the DCC sector, the study provides valuable foundational evidence, supplemented by new primary data gathered through the survey and consultations. Key sources are listed in the Bibliography in [Section 7.2](#).

2.2.2. Consultations

SPI spoke to 21 consultees, including:

- Five DCCs of varying audience sizes, operating models, regions, and genres
- Nine consultees from broadcasters, production companies, a digital content agency and a video service platform
- Seven consultees from industry/trade bodies and training providers.

The consultation topics were structured around the eight research questions ([Figure 1](#)) and designed to generate direct insight from consultees with first-hand experience of the sector. They also provided an opportunity to test emerging findings and lines of inquiry, while capturing a range of distinct perspectives on the DCC sector within a confidential and supportive discussion environment to ensure the DCC voice is paramount.

2.2.3. Survey

Live from 12th February – 23rd March 2026, the survey asked DCCs about pathways, skills, training, opportunities and barriers. The targeted survey, shared with consultees as well as through social media and SPI's networks, achieved:

- 20 respondents, with follower counts ranging from under 10,000 to over 1 million ²¹
- National/regional spread, including responses from London, East Midlands, Yorkshire and the Humber, South East and South West England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The survey was conducted to collect indicative evidence to complement and support the qualitative findings from the consultations. There was strong alignment across both strands of research, with a high degree of crossover in the themes identified.

2.2.4. Skills Taxonomy

Drawing from consultations, the survey and desk research, and drawing inspiration from

Nesta's skills taxonomy,²² the Skills Taxonomy²³ organises DCC skills into four categories:

- **Creative skills** – ability to produce original ideas and translate them into compelling and innovative digital content (e.g., creative ideation, scriptwriting, performing)
- **Technical skills** – ability to use digital tools, platforms and production techniques to create, edit and distribute content effectively (e.g., video recording, video editing, platform analytics)
- **Business skills** – ability to manage the commercial, operational and strategic aspects of content creation and build sustainable career opportunities (e.g., financial management, project management, marketing strategy)
- **Transversal skills** – ability to communicate and work effectively with others, build audience trust and maintain professional relationships (e.g. communication, networking, resilience)²⁴

The full Skills Taxonomy, which breaks down the key skills required under each of the four categories, is found in [Section 4.4](#).

2.2.5. Case Studies

Three case studies were selected for the study. Each was chosen to reflect a different part of the DCC ecosystem, including large-scale DCC businesses, solo DCC practice, and structured training provision:

²¹ Given the low sample size of the survey, results have been analysed as thematic rather than quantitative. A summary of the survey questions and response themes is included in the Appendix ([Section 7.1](#))

²² *Making sense of skills: A UK skills taxonomy*. Nesta. Accessible at: <https://data-viz.nesta.org.uk/skills-taxonomy/index.html>

²³ A skills taxonomy is a structured framework for defining and categorising the skills relevant to a sector or occupation. It provides a common language for identifying different skill types and understanding how they relate to one another

- **Ali-A** – selected as an established, globally recognised DCC with a large team, multi-platform presence, and extensive experience in recruiting digital-native talent outside traditional film and television pathways
- **Kyle Thomas** – selected for his experience working with the BBC and Channel 4, offering insight into the differences between content creation for video-sharing platforms and broadcaster platforms, as well as a national perspective from Belfast and a solo DCC model
- **BBC The Social** – selected as a strong example of structured talent development, combining partnership working with BBC Scotland News and the delivery of digital media production training across Scotland and the North East of England.

The full case studies can be found in [Section 3.4 Case Studies](#).

3. DCC Profiling: Who DCCs are, how they operate & how they develop skills

3.1. Overview of DCCs as Creative Entrepreneurs

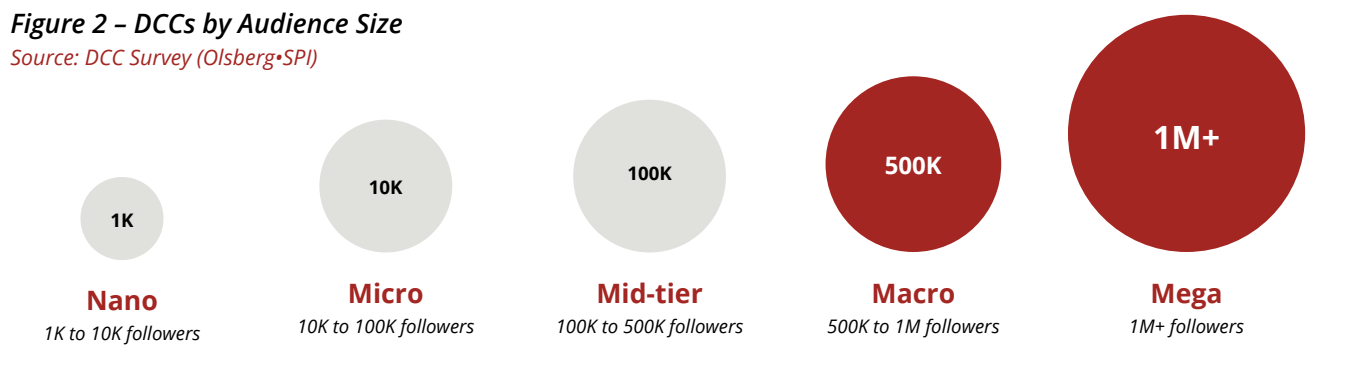
DCCs are an entrepreneurial part of the screen ecosystem, with a diverse range of motivations,

pathways and business models, and requiring a broad range of related skills.

The scale of DCCs' audiences can vary widely from a few thousand followers to millions (Figure 2).

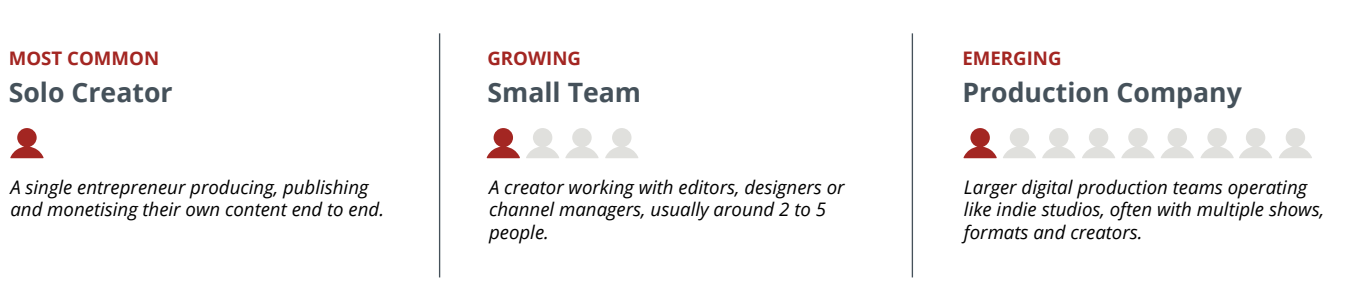
Figure 2 – DCCs by Audience Size

Source: DCC Survey (Olsberg•SPI)



While most DCCs start and continue to operate as solo entrepreneurs, others may work in larger digital production teams (Figure 3).

Figure 3 – DCC Business Shapes



DCCs work across video-sharing platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, Twitch and LinkedIn, with many creating content across multiple platforms (Figure 4). Content ranges from short-form content, such as TikToks and Instagram Reels, to long-form content such as Twitch streams or YouTube videos.

Figure 4 – Types of DCC Content and Platforms



Common DCC approaches to monetisation include brand gifting, paid brand sponsorships, user-generated content, direct payment through brands, affiliate or brand partnerships, creator funds offered by video-sharing platforms, and fan donations (Figure 5).

Figure 5 – How DCCs Monetise



3.2. DCCs' Motivations and Measures of Success

Given that there is a range of motivations for becoming a DCC, career progression ambitions and measures of success vary from individual to individual. A 2025 study by the National Centre of Social Research for the HMRC found that while some DCCs were actively pursuing content creation as a main source of income, others intended to continue content creation as a pastime, or were interested in increasing their

income through content creation but had other priorities, such as other employment or caring responsibilities.²⁵ DCCs who responded to SPI's survey were a mix of professionals pursuing digital content creation as a primary and secondary profession (i.e., as the main or sole source of income vs as a supplementary source of income). Respondents' motivations to pursue DCC included developing their creative skills, sharing or building a community around a common interest, and generating an income.

Some DCCs see entering film and television as a key milestone for career progression, with several consultees highlighting the prestige and legitimacy still associated with traditional or "legacy" media. DCCs looking to break into film and television see video-sharing platforms as a tool to provide visibility, help build an audience base and a portfolio of creative work that can serve as a pathway into traditional media. For these DCCs, video-sharing platforms can function as a training ground for honing their craft, developing their creative voice and demonstrating commercial viability. These DCCs may transition into on-screen film and television roles, such as presenting and acting, but many take a more collaborative role in the creative process, actively developing their own IP for film or television. Recent examples of this include YouTuber Lucia Keskin, who created and starred in BBC Three's show *Things You Should Have Done* (2024-present), or TikTok Munya Chawawa's documentary *How to Survive a Dictator* (2024) on Channel 4.

Many DCCs continue to grow their career primarily through digital platforms, allowing them to maintain creative autonomy and commercial control over their content. Many DCCs focus on progressing and growing their own digital-first brand, monetising through brand partnerships, paid subscriptions or products. Many consultees noted a growing trend of DCCs starting their own digital-first production companies.

²⁵ *Research to Understand Social Media Content Creators*. UK Government, 2025. Accessible at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/understanding-social-media-content-creators/research-to-understand-social-media-content-creators>

Examples include Dimz Inc., a creative studio founded by DCC Amelia Dimoldenberg,²⁶ and After Party Studios, co-founded by YouTuber Callum McGingley.²⁷ Another key example of a DCC group that has been able to scale their business is the Sidemen, a group of seven British YouTubers who have built a following of 23 million subscribers on their group YouTube channel, and as well as working with Netflix, have launched a series of business ventures including a clothing line, philanthropic events, as well as their own video streaming platform, Side+, showing how DCCs can successfully develop their own careers beyond traditional film and television formats.

3.3. How DCCs Develop Their Skills and Access Support

3.3.1. Existing Training and Support Provision for DCCs

Most DCCs develop their skills primarily through self-directed, informal, and practice-based learning rather than through formal courses. In part, this is due to the fact that many DCCs start out with no or low income, and there is currently no national skills fund targeted at DCCs, making formal training cost prohibitive. Given the accessibility of DCC platforms and tools, as well as free resources such as written guides and video tutorials across the web and from the platforms themselves, DCCs can learn by doing. Through experimenting with different platforms, they can develop their formats

over time and determine the most effective ways to reach their audience, create quality content and monetise themselves.

Nonetheless, various training programmes for DCCs exist across the UK, including university degrees²⁸, apprenticeships²⁹, and online training courses³⁰. One example is the government-funded Mastered Skills Bootcamp, which provides 10 weeks of free training in business and AI skills for DCCs (as well as small business owners and craft makers).³¹ The programme is designed by industry experts and offers resources, workshops, and individual coaching and mentoring, as well as access to networking opportunities.

As well as offerings from training providers, broadcasters and video-sharing platforms have developed their own initiatives to develop DCC skills. Channel 4's Content Creatives programme is a training and placement opportunity in West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester, offering 16 weeks of paid classroom-based and practical learning to help participants into careers in content creation.³² Through the programme, trainees develop skills such as copywriting, research and data analysis, idea generation, communication, graphic design, and collaboration.³³ The programme has trained 100 people since its inception in 2021, and has recently expanded with Content Creatives+, which aims to support alumni through further placements.³⁴

²⁶ Dimz Inc. Accessible at: <https://www.dimzinc.com/>

²⁷ After Party Studios. Accessible at: <https://afterparty.studio/>

²⁸ Content Creation BA (Hons). Falmouth University. Accessible at: https://www.falmouth.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/content-creation?utm_term

²⁹ Content creator (level 3). Gov. UK. Accessible at: <https://findapprenticeshiptraining.apprenticeships.education.gov.uk/courses/174?location=London%20Fields,%20Greater%20London>

³⁰ Online Content Creation Classes. Skillshare. Accessible at: <https://www.skillshare.com/en/browse/content-creation?>

³¹ Business and AI Skills for Freelancers. Mastered. Accessible at: https://join.mastered.com/business_ai_skill

³² C4 Content Creatives. Channel 4, 2025. Accessible at: <https://www.c4contentcreatives.com/>

³³ The Role of a Content Creatives Trainee. Channel 4, 2025. Accessible at: <https://www.c4contentcreatives.com/the-role/>

³⁴ Channel 4 launches Content Creatives+ development scheme. Advanced Television, 20th February 2026. Accessible at: <https://www.advanced-television.com/2026/02/20/channel-4-launches-content-creatives-development-scheme/>

The programme is funded by Channel 4's training scheme 4Skills, and trainees are paid directly by Channel 4 and its participating partner organisations.³⁵ Channel 4 has also hosted Create Your Legacy Day, an event designed to help DCCs expand beyond their own platforms and work with brands, streamers and broadcasters.³⁶

The BBC has also created several paid talent development initiatives for DCCs, including The Social, detailed in Section 3.4.3, and BBC Creator Labs, run in partnership with TikTok. The Creator Labs programme launched in 2023, offering training sessions to over 90 DCCs across the UK over two days, including a TikTok masterclass and talks from successful DCCs such as Munya Chawawa and Poppy O'Toole on how to break into film and television. The programme then evolved into BBC Creator Lab x Football, where 12 sports DCCs competed for a role contributing to BBC Sports TV and digital coverage, receiving mentoring from professionals across football, digital and broadcasting. The current iteration of the programme is focused on gardening and horticulture DCCs, involving a two-day training retreat for 13 DCCs, followed by opportunities to create content through social media or on the BBC's platforms for the Chelsea Flower Show.³⁷

More recently, the BBC has launched two new talent development programmes for DCCs. In partnership with the National Film and Television School and YouTube, BBC announced the Create x Connect initiative, which consists of three fully-funded training programmes for producers, DCCs and journalists: Digital News Programme: Trusted Storytelling for the Next Generation, Children

& Learning Creator Programme: Impactful Digital Storytelling for Young Audiences, and Digital Content Success Programme: Strategies for Growth & Audience Impact. These 10-week programmes, delivered online and in person across the UK, aim to upskill sector professionals to adapt to the digital-first media landscape.³⁸

The other programme launched by the BBC in partnership with North East Screen is the Digital Accelerator programme, a nine-month programme to support North East based production companies in developing digital-first content for 16–24-year-olds on video-sharing platforms such as TikTok, Twitch and YouTube.³⁹ The Digital Accelerator is backed by £600,000 of investment from the BBC and the North East Screen Industries Partnership (NESIP), with NESIP funding provided through the North East Combined Authority and Tees Valley Combined Authority.⁴⁰

3.3.2. Training Effectiveness

DCCs see peer learning and mentoring as a highly valuable form of training, with both survey respondents and consultees indicating that it is the most popular training type, both in terms of experience and efficacy (Figure 6). Consultees noted that the advantage of this type of training was that it allows DCCs to directly exchange knowledge and skills through conversation and collaboration, drawing on first-hand professional experience. This reflects the trend found in the traditional screen sector, with UK screen professionals rating mentoring/coaching to be the second most useful form of training (39%).⁴¹

³⁵ *Thirty-one trainees join Channel 4's innovative Content Creatives and Production Training Schemes 2024*. Channel 4, 30th September 2024. Accessible at: <https://www.channel4.com/press/news/thirty-one-trainees-join-channel-4s-innovative-content-creatives-and-production-training>

³⁶ https://www.linkedin.com/posts/evie-buckley-170046a0_proud-to-have-produced-and-hosted-a-second-activity-7301530665945075713-3Esa/

³⁷ *BBC Creator Lab*. BBC, 2025. Accessible at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/commissioning/creatorlab>

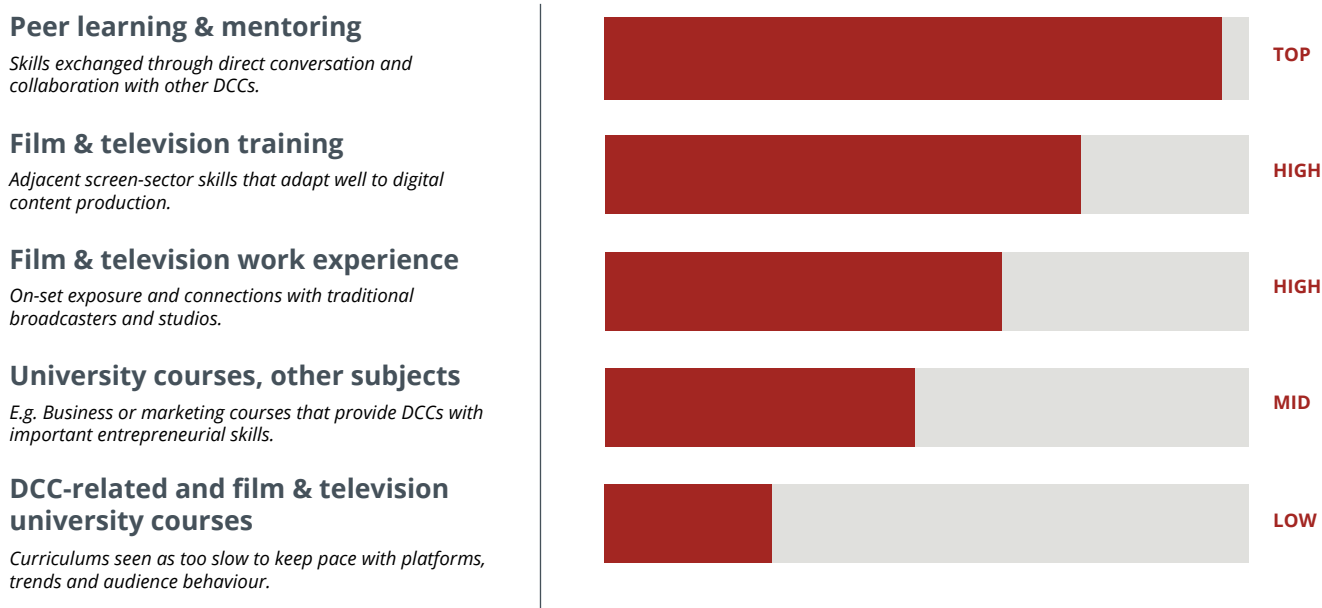
³⁸ *NFTS Launches 'Create x Connect' Training in Partnership with BBC and YouTube*. 26th January 2026. Accessible at: <https://nfts.co.uk/article/nfts-launches-create-x-connect-training-partnership-bbc-and-youtube>

³⁹ *BBC and North East Screen shortlist 12 companies for landmark Digital Accelerator initiative*. BBC, 3rd February 2026. Accessible at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/2026/ne-screen-digital-accelerator>

⁴⁰ *Accelerating the future of digital content*. North East Screen, 8th November 2025. Accessible at: <https://northeastscreen.org/accelerating-the-future-of-digital-content-bbc-and-north-east-screen-launch-groundbreaking-digital-accelerator-programme/>

⁴¹ *Powering Production: Identifying skills needs in the UK's screen industry*. ScreenSkills, April 2026. Accessible at: <https://www.screenskills.com/media/vvrbc3e/powering-production-april-2026.pdf>

Figure 6 – Most to Least Effective Training for DCCs



Source: Analysis of SPI's DCC Survey (n=15) and Consultations

Film or television-related training and work experience were also rated by survey respondents as effective forms of training amongst those who had undertaken it, suggesting that some film and television experience can help to develop skills which are common across both sectors, such as writing or video recording, which can be adapted for use in the creation of digital content.

Film and television training could also be useful in providing exposure to DCCs looking to work with traditional screen sector partners such as broadcasters. Consultees suggested that the value that broadcasters such as the BBC offer through training programmes such as Creator Labs is the experience of high-quality production environments, connections to film and television, and credits from a recognised traditional industry player.

University courses were seen by survey respondents as the least effective forms of

training, particularly DCC-related and film or television-related university courses. Given the fast-paced nature of digital content creation, particularly how platforms, trends and audience behaviour is constantly evolving, traditional university curriculums may be too slow and insufficiently practical to adapt to the changes, leaving graduates with outdated skill sets. This is reflective of the wider Creative Industries, with skills needs changing rapidly due to innovation and technological advancement.⁴²

Non-specific university courses were more popular than those related to DCC and film or television, suggesting that courses on skills not specific to digital content creation or film and television, such as marketing or business management, are valuable in helping DCCs develop business skills to help them succeed as entrepreneurs, beyond the more creative and technical aspects of creating digital content.

⁴² Creative Industries Skills Audits: Summary Report. Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre, 12th May 2026. Accessible at: https://pec.ac.uk/research_report_entr/creative-industries-skills-audits/

3.4. Case Studies

The following case studies illustrate different DCC pathways and support models, showing how DCCs operate, scale, develop skills and move between digital-first and wider screen-sector contexts.⁴³

3.4.1. Ali-A – Digital Content Creator

Ali-A (Alastair Aiken) is a gaming DCC based in the south of England, best known for family-friendly Call of Duty and Fortnite content, plus reaction and companion formats on secondary channels. His business is anchored in YouTube, but extends across Instagram, TikTok and Twitch, giving him a large, globally visible, multi-platform audience footprint (Figure 7). Ali-A has been active in the DCC sector since 2009.

Figure 7 – Ali-A's Followers and Subscribers by Platform

PLATFORM	FOLLOWERS / SUBSCRIBERS
YOUTUBE	~19.7 Million
YOUTUBE (MOREALIA)	~20.3 Million
INSTAGRAM	~2.1 Million
TIKTOK	~2.1 Million
TWITCH	291,000



Evolving from solo DCC to cross-platform production business

Ali-A operated as a solo DCC for the majority of the time he's worked in the sector, undertaking all key tasks himself – from ideation, filming, editing and posting. He now operates a fully operational business of around 20 people across various countries, who work mostly on exclusive freelance or contract arrangements. Employed roles now include editors, short-form specialists, channel managers, producers and thumbnail designers, while Ali-A concentrates on the least delegable functions: on-camera performance, idea selection and packaging. The workflow is tailored to the platform, using separate channels for different audiences and uploading directly to YouTube instead of combining everything into one

⁴³ The case studies in sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.2 reflect each DCC's actual experience, and therefore do not explore what support or opportunities could have been put in place to support their career pathways.

⁴⁴ SCUF Valor Pro Wireless Ali-A. SCUF. Accessible at: <https://www.scufgaming.com/uk/en/p/scuf-valor-pro-wireless-ali-a?srsId=AfmBOoq4ENorqCHdBEBtgzFKTSDjXiACIAOiooNEBWqaS0yqWZtlF17>

⁴⁵ Campaign Archive: Ali-A x Porsche. OP Talent. Accessible at: <https://www.optalent.com/blog-posts/campaign-archive-ali-a-x-porsche#:~:text=PORSCHE%20PARTNER%20WITH%20OP%20MEDIA'S%20ALI%20DA%20TO,rose%20from%205%25%20to%2026%25%20%C2%B7%20The>

⁴⁶ Ali-A. Penguin. Accessible at: <https://www.penguin.co.uk/authors/132296/ali-a>

⁴⁷ YouTube Launches \$100,000-Prize Global Competition Show to Find Next Big Gaming Creator, Hosted by Ali-A. Variety, 9th April 2022. Accessible at: <https://variety.com/2022/digital/news/youtube-uture-ali-a-reality-competition-show-1235227877/>

⁴⁸ Ali-A's Superchargers. CBBC. Accessible at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/shows/ali-as-superchargers>

instead of combining everything into one mixed-content feed. Revenue is diversified across platform monetisation, sponsorship, merchandise and licensed products. Ali-A has his own branded SCUF controllers,⁴⁴ was part of a Porsche campaign launched across 13 countries,⁴⁵ a Penguin-published graphic novel,⁴⁶ the DCC talent show uTure,⁴⁷ and CBBC's *Ali-A's Superchargers*.⁴⁸ Together, these show how a DCC business can scale into a cross-platform production and IP operation.

Building professional expertise through iteration rather than formal training

As with many other DCCs, Ali-A's career pathway has been predominantly self-taught rather than any formal training. Ali-A learned through YouTube tutorials, experimentation, peer support, editing practice and repeated iteration over many years. He began in gaming, built a large audience around *Call of Duty* in 2009, and later expanded successfully into *Fortnite* in 2017 and adjacent formats. In terms of training for this team, his model is practical: trial periods, on-the-job learning

and targeted course support, where useful. This points to a professional development model based more on continuous iteration and tacit platform knowledge, rather than on emphasis on formal training and standardised qualifications.

Combining creative, technical, platform and business skills in one operation

Ali-A demonstrates a healthy blend of creative, technical and business skills. Creative skills include ideation, niche literacy, performance, storytelling and, especially, packaging through titles, thumbnails and concept framing. Technical roles cover long- and short-form editing, thumbnail design, research, and monetisation setup. Business development skills include understanding his audience, analytics interpretation, multi-channel programming, and adapting content for different formats. These skill set functions overlap strongly with traditional film and television roles such as producer, editor, designer, production manager and presenter, but require much faster iteration and deeper platform fluency.

Key Takeaway

Skills development in the DCC sector is increasingly iterative, hybridised and practice-led rather than formally structured. Ali-A's trajectory shows how high-level capability emerges from continuous experimentation, platform-native learning and real-time audience feedback, with individuals building overlapping creative, technical and business skills simultaneously. As operations scale, these skills become more specialised but remain deeply interconnected, requiring both individual multi-skilling at the outset and later coordination across a team with distinct yet platform-specific expertise.

3.4.2. Kyle Thomas – Digital Content Creator

Kyle Thomas is a UK DCC best known for animal-led, personality-driven short-form videos. He built his audience primarily on TikTok, with content spanning rescued animals, comedy, food and day-in-the-life clips, and has increasingly positioned his work around wildlife, conservation and animal advocacy (Figure 8). He has been active in the DCC sector for roughly 10 years, where he first grew his following while based in the wider Belfast area.

Figure 8 – Kyle Thomas’ Followers and Subscribers by Platform

PLATFORM	FOLLOWERS / SUBSCRIBERS
YOUTUBE	~151,000
INSTAGRAM	~1.3 Million
TIKTOK	~34 Million

Expanding from self-produced short-form content into a broader media business

To date, Kyle has developed and produced the vast majority of his content himself. This includes coming up with the original ideas, planning and executing the footage, editing, and then posting and promoting on his channels. He’s recently started to employ others to support him, to permit further time for his own ideation and creative work.

Kyle has starred in several major broadcaster programmes, including *We Built a Zoo* (2025),⁴⁹ commissioned by BBC Three and BBC Northern Ireland and produced by Waddell Media, and *In*

Too Deep: Exposing the UK’s Puppy Farms with Kyle Thomas (2025) for Channel 4 Documentaries.⁵⁰ Kyle’s business model is spread across sponsorships, platform monetisation, publishing, appearances and premium factual projects. Key achievements include becoming the second most followed UK TikToker and inclusion in Forbes 30 Under 30 Europe 2024.⁵¹

Following a self-taught and entrepreneurial route into the DCC and film and television sector

Kyle’s pathway into the DCC sector has been self-taught and entrepreneurial rather than routed through formal training. He began by selling homemade slime on Instagram and Etsy at age 12, before viral traction pushed him toward making content creation his full-time profession, joining TikTok – his main channel today – in 2019. Kyle’s content initially focused on science, a personal interest of his, and livestreaming, before shifting toward animals, conservation and advocacy. From there, his career has expanded into publishing and broadcast work.



⁴⁹ *We Built a Zoo*. BBC. Accessible at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m0023k39>
⁵⁰ *In Too Deep: Exposing the UK’s Puppy Farms with Kyle Thomas*. Channel 4 Documentaries. Accessible at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=miPc_NYEyJA&list=PLiC_gpE7y052hWQORY2Hvupd9WedwE14y&index=2&t=3s
⁵¹ *30 Under 30 Europe 2024: Art & Culture*. Forbes. Accessible at: <https://www.forbes.com/pictures/66106f7218f0f47b66a9121b/kyle-thomas-19creator/>

Prioritising creative judgment over pure technical competence

As demonstrated in the study's wider research, Kyle emphasised the importance of creative skills and creative judgment over technical skills and competence. He sees, as many of the other consultees noted, that technical skills can often be self-taught or hired in, whereas creativity, originality, authenticity, charisma and communication are what make content travel. He therefore sees it as important for DCCs to have a hybrid skill set: idea development, on-camera presentation, audience understanding,

trend literacy, visual storytelling and the ability to adapt tone and structure for TikTok, YouTube or broadcaster contexts.

Kyle also highlighted a growing need for more premium filmmaking skills within digital content creation as competition increases and the need to stand out intensifies. These requirements overlap strongly with screen-sector roles such as presenter, producer, director, editor and factual storyteller, but they also require fast platform instincts and the ability to move between polished long-form work and high-volume social publishing.

Key Takeaway

Kyle Thomas' trajectory highlights that success in digital content creation is driven less by formal training or purely technical ability, and more by a hybrid skill set centred on creative judgment. Skills such as originality, audience awareness, on-camera communication, and platform fluency are critical for building and sustaining engagement, while technical capabilities can often be self-taught or outsourced. As the sector matures, however, DCCs increasingly need to combine these strengths with higher-end filmmaking and storytelling skills - demonstrating that the most valuable talent lies in the ability to bridge creative intuition with professional production standards across both social and traditional media contexts.

3.4.3. BBC The Social – Talent Development Initiative

BBC The Social, running from 2015 to March 2026, was a Glasgow-based BBC Scotland initiative that discovered, mentored and commissioned emerging talent, especially younger DCCs and underrepresented voices (Figure 9).⁵² It supported DCCs, presenters and early-career producers through short-form social video and digital storytelling published across BBC platforms, with The Social Connects adding a training route.

Figure 9 – BBC The Social at a Glance

ACTIVE YEARS	2015-2026
GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE	- Based in Glasgow / Scotland - The Social Connects extended across Scotland and the North East of England through 9 partner colleges
CONTRIBUTORS	250+ contributors

Using a mentorship-led model to develop early-career DCCs

The Social’s model was characterised as a commissioning- and mentorship-led approach, rather than a conventional classroom-based training mode. The Social was not simply a platform for publishing material sent in by DCCs.



Instead, contributors were paid, supported early in their careers, and developed through a tailored model focused on individual potential rather than a one-size-fits-all curriculum. Training focused more on storytelling, audience connection, authenticity and consistency, as well as creating a peer-learning community, including shared groups and collaboration between DCCs. Consultees who were contributors to The Social emphasised the value they placed on the peer-learning community. They highlighted open discussion with fellow DCCs as one of the most effective means of developing their skills and accessing support, particularly given that working as a DCC can be challenging due to the lack of safeguarding online.

The Social Connects was a more structured training programme offered by BBC The Social.⁵³ The initiative included a partnership with nine colleges across Scotland and the North East of England, providing a module on digital media production as part of creative media courses offered by the colleges, consisting of learning videos, presentations and practical tasks. This programme aimed to train college students in essential skills for entering the digital content production workforce, from filming digital content to applying for jobs.

⁵² BBC The Social. Accessible at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p039wndg>

⁵³ The Social Connects. BBC. Accessible at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/5KK47D4mdwdF0syY49jQh9n/the-social-connects>

The Social functioned as an early-stage bridge into wider television pathways. Contributors were able to leverage both BBC credits and the reputational strength of the BBC brand to gain access to employment opportunities. Some moved directly into BBC roles, including researcher, producer, presenter, and BBC Radio DJ, while others went on to develop careers across television, digital production, casting, and on-screen performance. This suggests that The Social played an important

role in converting emerging DCC talent into more established screen careers, by offering not only practical industry experience but also the institutional credibility needed to support progression. In terms of what further support the BBC could offer to DCCs, one contributor suggested offering them more courses, workshops and events around DCCs' subjects of interest to ensure they can create engaging and credible content with reliable sources.

Key Takeaway

BBC The Social shows that effective DCC training is not just about teaching technical basics; it depends on paid opportunities, mentoring and community. It also suggests that, if backed by sustained institutional investment, DCC development pipelines can generate strong progression outcomes.

4. Key skills for digital content creation & crossover with film and television

This section outlines the key technical, creative, business and transversal skills enabling DCCs to scale and succeed both now and in the future, as well as exploring how these skills overlap with skills required in the film and television sector and highlighting existing skills gaps and needs for DCCs. This section also provides a Skills Taxonomy, which organises DCC skills hierarchically by cluster (technical, creative, business, and transversal) and sub-clusters (such as transversal skills related to communication and leadership).

4.1. Key Skills for the DCC Sector

DCCs require a range of technical, creative, business and transversal skills as creative entrepreneurs (Figure 10). Over 6 in 10 UK DCCs manage everything on their own, requiring them to take on multiple roles at once, from developing and creating digital content, to navigating the platforms they are building on, to handling the logistics of running a DCC business.⁵⁴

Video recording and editing are fundamental technical skills that DCCs need to create quality content for audiences to watch. This includes an understanding of using certain tools, such as cameras and video editing software. The level of proficiency in these skills and the tools required can depend on the content format. Short-form videos such as TikToks may be filmed on a mobile phone and edited with easy-to-use editing software such as CapCut, whereas a

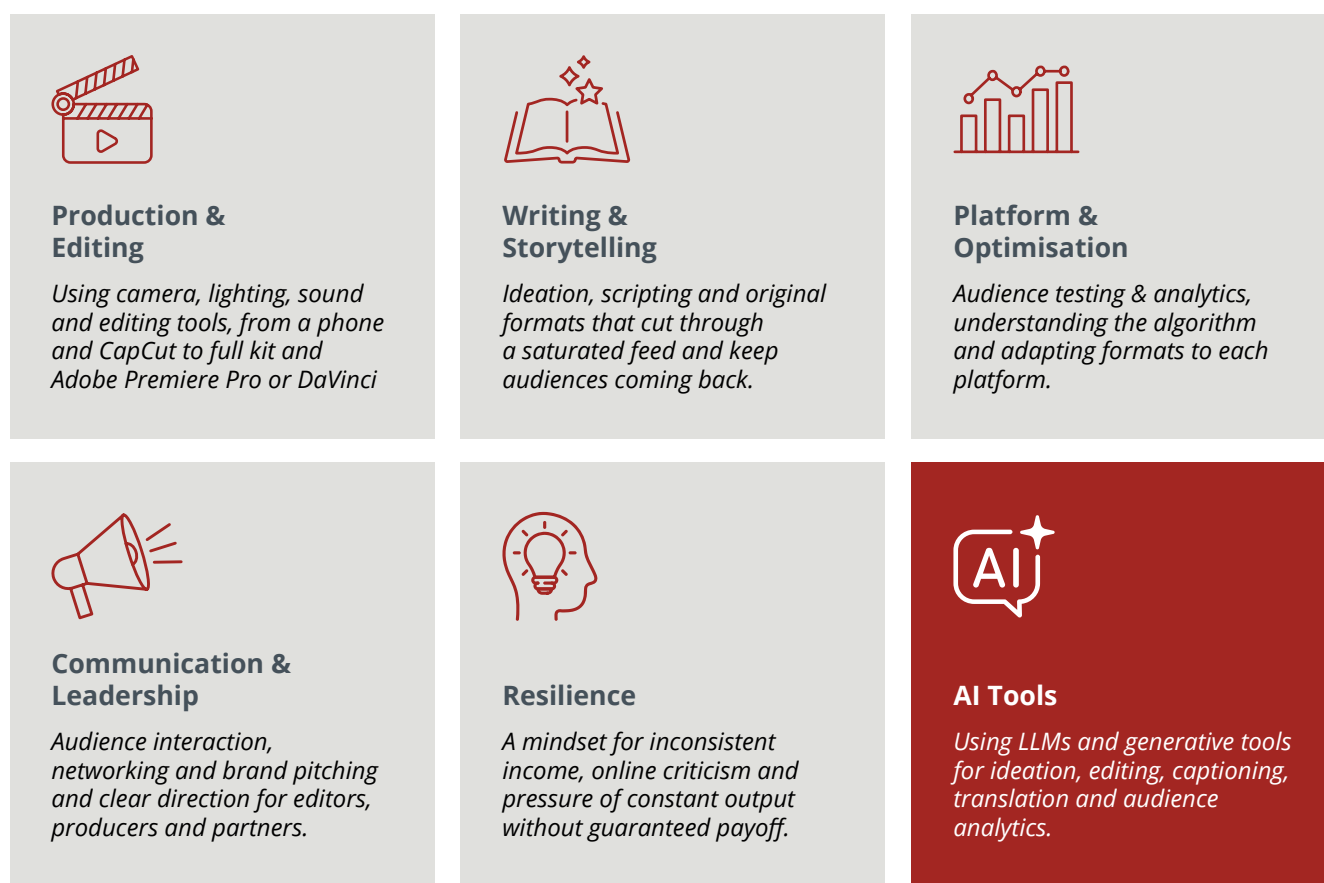
longer-form YouTube video is likely to require a more sophisticated camera set up and use more complex editing software such as Adobe Premiere Pro or DaVinci Resolve. Meanwhile, for content on livestreaming platforms such as Twitch, editing skills are less of a priority, although editing would still be required to repurpose content from live streams into shorter-form highlights that can be shared on other video-sharing platforms such as Instagram or TikTok for greater discoverability.

Increased access to technology and intuitive tools for content creation means that aspiring DCCs can develop certain technical skills with ease. As a result, the evidence from consultations shows that while basic technical skills such as editing and video recording are important, they are not the main differentiator. Furthermore, as AI becomes increasingly integrated into tools such as CapCut and Adobe, DCCs can leverage this to streamline production workflows, reducing some technical skills gaps in areas such as editing.

The growing prevalence of AI-generated content has also had an impact on audience appetites, with viewers seeking out authenticity and signs of human creation in digital content. As such, DCCs who create “lo-fi”, less technically polished content can, in some cases, be at an advantage, lowering the need for deep technical expertise as storytelling and performing skills take priority. The key skills required for the DCC sector are summarised in Figure 10.

⁵⁴ *Voices of the Creator Economy 2025*. Kolsquare, July 2025. Accessible at: <https://www.kolsquare.com/en/free-ressources/voices-of-the-creator-economy-by-kolsquare-newtonx>

Figure 10 – Key Skills for the DCC Sector



Certain creative skills were identified as critical for success as a DCC, including ideation (i.e., developing creative ideas for content) and writing/storytelling. With anyone being able to create and upload content for free, video-sharing platforms are saturated with content – for example, on YouTube alone, an average of 20 million videos are posted per day⁵⁵ – so DCCs must consistently come up with original and creative ideas and formats to draw and maintain engagement. The criticality of other related skills varies depending on the type of content, with DCCs creating factual or educational content, for example, having an additional need to conduct more in-depth research to avoid misinforming audiences. The same applies to

performance skills, such as acting or presenting. Many DCCs are the “face” of their content, requiring them to be proficient at performing and clearly communicating in front of a camera or directly addressing the audience. On the other hand, genres such as documentary-style content require DCCs to be proficient in directing others in front of the camera.

Platform literacy was seen by this study’s survey respondents and consultees as key to setting DCCs apart. Video-sharing platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube are constantly changing, from new features and layout updates to algorithm changes.

⁵⁵ YouTube for Press. Accessible at: <https://blog.youtube/press/>

DCCs need to keep up to date with these ongoing changes and adapt their content and the delivery of it to maintain consistent reach and engagement. A large part of this is platform analytics, search engine optimisation and algorithms, which enable DCCs to monitor and understand how their content lands with their audience. All video-sharing platforms have built-in platform analytics for DCCs to understand metrics such as engagement activity (e.g., viewing time, likes, reposts, comments), audience demographics, and follower/subscriber counts.

To be successful, DCCs must be able to interpret this data and use it to optimise their content for the platform, particularly as they typically work across multiple platforms – a format that is successful on one video-sharing platform will not necessarily translate to another, so DCCs must learn what works for each one and how best to use each platform (e.g., treating one platform as the main tool for monetisation and using other platforms to attract and redirect audiences).

Several marketing skills were also highlighted as critical business skills. DCCs must develop marketing, content and growth strategies, using audience testing techniques and data analysis to develop their personal brand and position themselves uniquely to develop a successful business. This requires an understanding of how to appeal to their audience and establish an identifiable public persona, along with elements such as a consistent visual style and original and recognisable formats. This also involves keeping on top of general audience trends and tailoring content to ensure it is search engine optimised.

Communication is another key transversal skill for DCCs, which applies to multiple aspects of their role. One of the defining features of digital content as a medium is that it involves direct interaction with subscribers and followers to connect with the audience and establish authenticity. Multiple consultees cited this community engagement

as an important part of success as a DCC. DCCs leading larger teams or digital content production companies also require communication skills to ensure that their teams are aligned with their brand and approach, particularly in the case of virtual or hybrid working, which can be typical for DCC teams. In addition, as DCCs increasingly work with brand or film and television partners, communication becomes more critical to ensure effective collaboration.

Networking and relationship building are related critical skills for DCCs. Most UK DCCs generate their income through working with brands, including paid collaborations/ sponsored content, affiliate marketing and brand ambassador programmes. Approximately half of UK DCCs secure these opportunities by pitching directly to brands, while 43% find opportunities through networking and events.⁵⁶ Particularly, for those who are unrepresented by a manager or a talent agency, DCCs must learn how to reach out to potential collaborators and clients, as well as how to maintain professional relations to secure ongoing and repeat partnership work.

Finally, resilience was noted by survey respondents and consultees as a key skill for DCCs. Becoming a success as a DCC involves consistent and persistent output, with no guarantee of success, even if the content goes viral periodically. In addition, DCCs must face challenges such as working in isolation, online hate and criticism (discussed further in [Section 5.1](#)), and ever-changing platforms and algorithms leading to inconsistent income streams. Over one in five UK DCCs in recent research reported being stressed or burnt out all the time or often, with managing content creation alongside another job, deadlines and pressure to constantly create content cited as key stressors, along with financial instability, creative block and overwhelming workloads.⁵⁷ DCCs must develop coping strategies and a strong mindset to overcome these pressures in order to maintain their success.

⁵⁶ *Voices of the Creator Economy 2025*. Kolsquare, July 2025. Accessible at: <https://www.kolsquare.com/en/free-ressources/voices-of-the-creator-economy-by-kolsquare-newtonx>

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

Using AI tools was highlighted amongst survey respondents and consultees as a key skill necessary for the future. According to research, 24% of UK DCCs are already using AI tools such as ChatGPT, image generators and editing tools for their daily work, with 32% using it several times a week.⁵⁸ Applications include using tools such as LLMs for ideation, writing or editing text, automating responses to follower comments, creating and editing images, video and audio, predicting content performance based on trends, content analytics and SEO optimisation. Other AI uses highlighted in consultations included adapting content for different formats or platforms, captioning and subtitling, translation of content into different languages to expand audience reach and developing creative briefs.

4.2. Skills Crossover with Film and Television

There are notable similarities between the skills required for the DCC sector and the film and television sector (Figure 11). Skills that would be required for above-the-line⁵⁹ creative roles in film and television, such as ideation, scriptwriting, pitching, directing, as well as on-screen skills such as acting, presenting, and interviewing, are all skills applicable to creating digital content. Additional technical and creative skills behind the camera, such as pre-production planning and logistics, sound and video recording, lighting, and editing, are also skills that are needed for creating both film and television and digital content. As DCCs take on more sophisticated production workflows, this overlap extends across a wider range of production skills. This includes digital production skills required in the animation, postproduction, VFX and video games sectors, such as using industry-standard tools such as editing and sound software and understanding how technical and creative processes are integrated across the production pipeline.⁶⁰

Figure 11 – Key Skills Overlaps and Distinctions of the DCC and Film & Television Sectors

FILM & TV STRENGTHS	SHARED SKILLS	DCC STRENGTHS
Specialist depth • Specialised roles • Deeper technical expertise per discipline • Large production teams and crews • Long-form narrative craft • Studio and broadcaster workflows	Overlap • Ideation, scriptwriting and pitching • Directing, acting, presenting, interviewing • Pre-production planning and logistics • Camera, sound and lighting • Editing and post-production	Platform-native breadth • Generalist skill sets, multiple roles at once • Format adaptation across platforms • Platform analytics and SEO • High-volume, fast-turnaround productions • Direct audience interaction and community

However, while there are overarching skills overlaps, the notable differences between content types, formats and audiences mean that the application of skills between the sectors is different, requiring DCCs to adjust their skills to apply them in the film and television sector, and vice versa (Figure 11). One way in which skills applications differ between sectors is in breadth; it is more common for DCCs to have a broader range of skills rather than the specialised skill sets that film and television professionals typically develop. In the film and television sector, the production teams are typically significantly larger, with individuals assuming specialised roles such as

editor, performer or camera operator. Most DCCs, by comparison, start their career as individuals, and many will remain individual DCCs or have small teams, requiring them to take on multiple roles (and related skill sets) at once.

As a result, film and television workers looking to transition into digital content creation may need to upskill themselves in a broad range of different skills, while DCCs looking to transition into certain technical film or television roles may need to develop deeper sector-specific expertise to fit specific role requirements (for example, more sophisticated scriptwriting skills).

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Above-the-line roles refer to the list of people who guide and influence the creative direction, process and voice of a story, derived from a line in the budget above which are roles such as Screenwriter, Producer, Director and Actors.

⁶⁰ Skills Scoping Study for the UK's Digital Content Production Sectors. Olsberg•SPI, December 2023. Accessible at: <https://www.o-spi.com/news/new-spi-study-identifies-key-skills-challenges-and-opportunities-for-the-uks-digital-content-production-sectors>

In addition, there is a difference in DCC workflows compared to traditional film and television due to the way that video-sharing platforms operate. Multiple consultees noted that they would be less likely to hire someone with technical film and television experience alone for a technical digital content creation role, such as editing – while the core skill overlaps across sectors, the skill must be adapted to meet the fast pace and volume of digital content that must be shared in order to maintain engagement with audiences.

Platform-specific skills such as adapting content to different formats, managing publishing systems, platform analytics, and content optimisation are more unique to roles in digital content than in film and television production. In the Creative Policy and Evidence Centre's 2026 report, *Creative Industries Skills Audit for the Screen Industries*, consultees acknowledged the need for stronger commercial skills enabling the film and television workforce to adapt to shifts in content production, audiences and business models associated with the rise of video-sharing platforms.⁶¹ Meanwhile, DCCs are less accustomed to the formalised processes, risk management and commissioning practices of film and television. On one hand, this puts DCCs at an advantage, as they can work faster, be more experimental in their creative processes and take more commercial risks. However, it presents a potential challenge as DCCs crossing into film and television environments are faced with navigating these structures.

Consultees did raise some cases in which the application of skills for DCCs and those of film

and television professionals would align more closely. While DCCs who continue to work alone or in small teams tend to remain generalists (although they may outsource specific tasks such as editing to relevant digital content specialists), DCCs working for digital content production companies or larger-scale teams would have more differentiated roles, aligning more closely with film and television production. In addition, some digital content formats may resemble traditional film and television formats, such as larger-scale, long-form narrative content on YouTube, compared to a short-form TikTok or a Twitch livestream. For example, YouTube shows produced by digital entertainment company LADBible operate more like broadcast shoots, with complex equipment and set up and larger specialised crews.⁶²

4.3. Skills Gaps and Distinct Needs

Legal and IP management were highlighted as key skills gaps for DCCs. Compared to skills such as editing, which can often be picked up through practice, the ability to navigate legal and regulatory issues is much more difficult to acquire informally (Figure 12). Many DCCs lack the knowledge and skills to navigate copyright, trademarking, compliance, tax obligations, data protection, location permissions, health and safety standards, and contract negotiation. These capabilities become even more important as DCCs grow their audiences and commercial activity, enabling them to manage risk, secure fair terms in partnership agreements and protect their IP.

Figure 12 – DCC Skills Gaps

GAP 1 - ACQUIRED SKILL

Legal & IP Management

Hard to pick up through practice. Becomes more critical as DCCs grow audiences and commercial activity, manage risk and protect their IP.

TAX OBLIGATIONS TRADEMARKING DATA PROTECTION
COPYRIGHT CONTRACT NEGOTIATION COMPLIANCE

GAP 2 - TRANSITION SKILL

Workplace & Interpersonal

Surfaces when digital-native DCCs move into broadcaster, streamer, brand or production-company environments.

TIME MANAGEMENT STRUCTURED COMMUNICATION
TEAM COLLABORATION NAVIGATING LARGER TEAMS

⁶¹ *Creative Industries Skills Audits: Screen*. Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre, 12th May 2026. Accessible at: <https://pec.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/PEC-Creative-Industries-Skills-Audits-%E2%80%93-Screen.pdf>

⁶² *Insight from Building a Creator Ecosystem for Long-Term Value*: In Conversation with LADBible at the Media Production and Television Show, May 2026

In addition, multiple consultees noted that as DCCs enter more structured professional environments for the first time, there can be some gaps in workplace and interpersonal skills, such as time management, communication, collaboration and navigating larger teams. These skills become more crucial as DCCs aim to scale or transition, working with broadcasters, streamers, brands or in larger production teams. Such skills can be developed through increased exposure and experience to such environments and leadership and management skills training.

4.4. Skills Taxonomy

The Skills Taxonomy identifies and organises the key skills required by those working in the DCC sector. It has been developed through a combination of consultations, survey data, and desk research undertaken for this Study. The Skills

Taxonomy is structured hierarchically across four levels: skills clusters (technical, creative, business, and transversal), followed by skills sub-clusters that group related capabilities (such as transversal skills related to communication and leadership), and finally individual skills (Figure 13).

To enhance usability and provide greater context, additional information is included where relevant, such as the DCC specialisms most clearly associated with each skill, examples of key tools or tasks associated with a skill, and whether the skill is transferable to the film and television sector. The Skills Taxonomy is presented here as an [interactive radial chart](#), enabling users to explore and navigate the full range of skills in a dynamic way, with the ability to click through the different levels to better understand how skills are applied across the DCC sector.

Figure 13 – Skills Taxonomy for DCCs

TECHNICAL SKILLS	CREATIVE SKILLS	BUSINESS SKILLS	TRANSVERSAL SKILLS
Production & Editing Skills • Lighting • Audio Recording • Video Editing • Video Recording • Repurposing long-form into short-form content • Editorial pre-planning • Equipment setup • Sound editing and design	Visual Design Skills • Interpreting creative briefs • Thumbnail design • Image composition • Branding • Creative direction • Graphic design • Motion graphic design	Commercial Skills • Monetisation strategy • Revenue forecasting • Budgeting • Sponsorship management • Contracting • Sales strategy • Pitching	Communication & Leadership Skills • Public speaking • Team communication • Stakeholder communication • Providing feedback (verbally and written) • Written communication • Networking • Professionalism • Managing teams • Delegation
Platform & Optimisation Skills • SEO • Platform Analytics • Data Analysis • Video Recording • Managing tags, end screen, chapters • Publishing system management	Writing Skills • Scriptwriting • Copywriting • Adapting to different formats (i.e. creative briefs, guest briefs, channel descriptions)	Operations & Planning Skills • Production planning • Scheduling • Workflow management • Project management • Rights clearance	Collaboration Skills • Diplomacy • Negotiation • Problem solving
Software Skills • Proficiency in editing and video software • Proficiency in AI tools	Content Development Skills • Story development • Creative ideation • Brand storytelling • Storyboarding / narrative structuring • Research	Strategy & Growth Skills • Content strategy • Growth strategy • Marketing strategy and analysis • Campaign ideation • Competitive analysis	Discipline Skills • Attention to detail • Time management • Resilience
	Performing Skills • Narration and voice over • Acting • Voice acting • Presenting • Interviewing		

5. Barriers to scale and cross-sector progression across the UK

This section focuses on barriers that affect DCCs' ability to scale sustainable careers in the digital content sector and access opportunities in the film and television sector. It places particular emphasis on online safety, harassment and wellbeing pressures, as well as exploring the national and regional nuances between starting and scaling a DCC career across the UK.

5.1. Online Safety, Harassment and Wellbeing

A major recurring concern from the consultations was the lack of current and nuanced training and structured support for DCCs navigating sudden audience growth, online harassment, and public scrutiny. Many DCCs gain a large audience very rapidly, without the skills or support needed to manage hate, maintain boundaries, and/or distinguish constructive criticism from abusive behaviour. Recent research reported that just over a third (37%) of UK DCCs have been the target of online harassment or negative behaviour, the second highest rate amongst European DCCs.⁶³ This included criticism or hate related to race or ethnicity, trolling or personal insults, body shaming and sexist or gender-based insults. UNESCO also reported that 32% of global DCCs had received hate speech, with only one-fifth of them reporting it to social media platforms.⁶⁴

An ongoing study by the University of the West of England in Bristol is examining the mental health and working conditions of DCCs.⁶⁵ Early interview findings highlighted significant pressures

linked to audience expectations, engagement metrics, trolling and blurred work-life boundaries. The research is continuing with a wider survey, reflecting growing concern about the wellbeing and support needs of DCCs as the sector expands.

In SPI's survey, when respondents were asked, "What are the biggest challenges or barriers in progressing your career as a DCC?", several responses highlighted the emotional and structural pressures DCCs face, with survey respondents citing loneliness, lack of support, uncertainty, and a lack of confidence as key issues. Given that DCCs often work alone or remotely, without the support of formal networks, it can often be an isolating experience, exacerbating these issues further. Consultees identified this as a significant gap and a potential priority area for intervention, particularly through media training, resilience-building, and online safety support.

5.2. Geographical Considerations in Starting Versus Scaling a DCC Career

Consultation findings suggest that digital content creation lowers some of the geographic barriers that have traditionally shaped access to careers in film and television. In principle, DCCs can build audiences and develop careers from almost anywhere, particularly in forms of work that are platform-native, remote or low-cost to produce (although issues such as poor connectivity in rural areas may provide an initial barrier).

⁶³ *Voices of the Creator Economy 2025*. Kolsquare, July 2025. Accessible at: <https://www.kolsquare.com/en/free-ressources/voices-of-the-creator-economy-by-kolsquare-newtonx>

⁶⁴ *Behind the screens: insights from digital content creators; understanding their intentions, practices and challenges*. UNESCO, 2024. Accessible at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000392006>

⁶⁵ *Social media influencer work is far more demanding than it looks, research finds*. UWE Bristol, 11th December 2025. Accessible at: <https://www.uwe.ac.uk/news/influencer-study>

Several consultees also noted that authentic national and regional voices can be a strength on digital platforms, where audiences are searching for representation and authenticity. In addition, consultees mentioned that DCCs outside of London can benefit from lower production costs and tighter-knit peer networks.

However, geography can still be a limiting factor when it comes to scaling as a DCC. Starting a DCC career can be relatively decentralised, but access to networks and events remains concentrated in London, the Southeast and other metropolitan hubs such as Manchester, Birmingham and Glasgow. Consultees noted that it is not uncommon for DCCs to move or have to travel to more metropolitan areas to pursue greater opportunities and attend DCC and brand events, particularly public-facing DCCs. In a 2022 study by the Screen Industries Growth Network, Yorkshire-based DCCs expressed the lack of accessible regional networking and training spaces for DCCs as a particular barrier to success, hindering community building, collaboration and skills exchange.⁶⁶

Geographical barriers in film and television present a particular challenge for DCCs looking for opportunities to transition into the sector. Although film and television training is spread across the UK (for example, 67% of ScreenSkills' training beneficiaries are outside of London)⁶⁷, screen work is still concentrated in Greater London, with 50% of professionals working in

London, according to ScreenSkills' *Powering Production* report.⁶⁸ ScreenSkills' 2025 *Sizing Up* report found that workers in English Regions are twice as likely to travel domestically for productions (53%) compared to London (26%).⁶⁹ This suggests that non-London based DCCs looking to work in film and television would also likely have to travel to access such opportunities.

Broadcasters have played a stronger equalising role through sustained investment in national and regional talent and voices, with initiatives such as the BBC's The Social in Scotland and the North East, BBC's Digital Accelerator in the North East of England and Channel 4's Content Creatives programme. However, more work could be done to create greater geographical inclusion in the sector through further regional training, local networks, hybrid provision and support that recognises the difference between starting and scaling a DCC career.

Unlike the film and television sector, which has been mapped in ScreenSkills' *Sizing Up* report, there is currently no available data on the geographical spread of professional DCCs within the UK. As such, no quantitative conclusions can be drawn as to whether DCCs are concentrated in any one area of the UK's Nations and Regions. The recent introduction of SIC codes for DCCs will enable future research to identify where DCCs are located, providing supporting quantitative evidence.

⁶⁶ *Levelling Up Social Media Content Creator Labour*. Screen Industries Growth Network, 2022. Accessible at: <https://screen-network.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Creator-Labour-FINAL.pdf>

⁶⁷ *ScreenSkills welcomes Government recognition of five year strategy*. ScreenSkills, 2025. Accessible at: <https://www.screenskills.com/news/screenskills-welcomes-government-recognition-of-five-year-strategy/>

⁶⁸ *Powering Production: Identifying skills needs in the UK's screen industry*. ScreenSkills, April 2026. Accessible at: <https://www.screenskills.com/media/vvrbc3e/powering-production-april-2026.pdf>

⁶⁹ *Sizing Up: Workforce Composition and Capacity in the Screen Industries*. Ampere Analysis, April 2025. Accessible at: https://www.screenskills.com/media/pfcoubcw/ampere_sizing-workforce_final-report_2025.pdf

6. Recommendations

6.1. Introduction

This section provides practical recommendations for screen sector stakeholders, including ScreenSkills and the BBC, to support DCC progression, skills development and sustainable DCC-led businesses.

These recommendations have been developed following consultations with 21 UK DCC-sector stakeholders and a survey of 20 DCCs, and were validated by a consultee once finalised.

Participants were specifically asked to identify the types of training, support, and industry interventions they believe would most effectively strengthen the DCC sector.

As a result, the recommendations presented are not based on theoretical assumptions but are grounded in the expressed needs and priorities of sector professionals and reflect the voice of the UK DCC community.

The recommendations focus on five objectives:

1. Supporting DCCs to scale and create sustainable business models
2. Building stronger DCC networks & cross-sector integration between DCC and film & television
3. Prioritising safeguarding and wellbeing training
4. Improving navigation of DCC learning provision by curating trusted resources
5. Developing the DCC skills base through accredited, modular micro-credentials

6.2. Detailed Objectives and Recommendations

Recommendations are mapped to three categories of the DCC journey (Figure 14). [Figure 15](#) illustrates how priorities, and consequently recommendations, differ across the five objectives in each DCC stream.

Figure 14 – Three Streams of DCC Progression

STREAM 1

DCCs starting out

WHO: Early-stage DCCs, typically nano and micro tier, working solo. This category also includes film and television professionals looking to enter the DCC sector.

KEY SUPPORT AREAS

- Foundational production and editing skills for digital formats
- Understanding of digital platforms and algorithms
- Navigating basic finance, online safety & wellbeing
- Peer connection and mentoring

STREAM 2

DCCs building & growing

WHO: Established DCCs looking to create larger-scale content, scale their teams or establish a digital content production company. Mid-tier to macro audiences, increasingly commercial.

KEY SUPPORT AREAS

- Developing deeper strategic commercial and monetisation skills
- Navigating legal and IP considerations
- Greater team leadership and management skills
- Brand partnerships and broader market access

STREAM 3

DCCs entering film and television

WHO: DCCs looking to bridge into the film and television sector, whether in front of the camera, behind the camera, or both.

KEY SUPPORT AREAS

- Exposure to film and television environments and workflows
- Understanding of film and television operations and compliance
- Structured access to film and television professionals, including commissioners and producers
- UK-wide networks supporting collaboration across interconnected creative-sector ecosystems

The cells below in [Figure 15](#) show how the priorities change for each of the five objectives in each DCC category. Film and television organisations such as ScreenSkills and the BBC and DCC sector organisations including professional bodies and video sharing platforms, are encouraged to work in collaboration with DCCs to address these objectives, with the Digital Creator APPG and the UK government's future Creative Freelance Champion supporting these ambitions in their future workplans.

As detailed in section 3.3.1, there are several DCC training and development initiatives already being delivered by broadcasters, training organisations

and video sharing platforms which support this study's recommended objectives.

The recommendations in Figure 15 have therefore been designed to:

- Build upon and refine existing DCC-specific interventions (such as the Create x Connect programme from NFTS, YouTube and the BBC)
- Adapt and expand non-DCC-specific initiatives, such as film and television programmes, to be more inclusive of DCCs,
- Develop new interventions to address remaining gaps in the current training landscape.

Figure 15 – Recommendations Across the Three Streams of DCC Progression

OBJECTIVES By Stream of DCC progression	STREAM 1 Starting out	STREAM 2 Building & growing	STREAM 3 Entering film and television
	SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS		
1. Support DCCs to scale and create sustainable business models Context: DCCs require entrepreneurial skills, especially to scale. Providing access to leadership and management training and resources would enable DCCs to build sustainable businesses, whether they are solo entrepreneurs or part of wider teams.	Provide training on: - Identifying a personal brand and building an initial strategy - Budgeting and time management fundamentals - Tax, data protection and basic compliance - Managing early monetisation streams - Adapting existing film & TV production skills for digital-first formats [for film and television professionals entering the DCC sector]	Provide training on: - Effectively delegating or outsourcing work - Diversifying revenue and managing larger scale partnerships - In-depth contracting, IP protection and advertising tax compliance - Hiring and managing responsibilities - Provide wide access to existing business training interventions like the Mastered Skills Bootcamp - Provide access to specialist advice through clinics with experts	Provide training on: - Partnership opportunities with film and television organisations - Understanding the commercial landscape of the film and television sector - Working with film and television commissioners, producers and talent agents - Understanding editorial standards and compliance in film and television
2. Build stronger DCC networks & cross-sector integration between DCC and film and television Context: DCCs upskill through peer-learning and mentoring. In addition, both the DCC and film and television sector have valuable learnings to offer each other. Dedicated forums and (paid) opportunities can facilitate UK-wide DCC and cross-sector skills exchange.	- Create peer-learning and mentoring initiatives for DCCs across the UK Nations and Regions - Create hybrid and online forums to widen access to those outside well-connected hubs (such as NFTS Create x Connect) - Develop commissioning based, practical, paid digital first opportunities, such as BBC The Social and BBC Creator Labs, to support emerging DCCs	- Develop structured networking, collaboration and marketplace events e.g. InfluencersLDN 2026 for DCCs across the UK Nations and Regions - Provide access to dedicated spaces/events for DCCs to collaborate and exchange skills with film and television professionals - Provide paid commissioning opportunities for established DCCs to create digital content for broadcasters (such as BBC Deepwatch)	- Create initiatives partnering film and television producers with DCCs on productions - Provide paid commissioning opportunities for DCCs to work on film and television projects - Integrate DCCs into networking, panels and talks at film and television industry events, such as the Creator Economy Summits from Marche du Film, Screen Queensland and MPTS' Creator Hub
3. Prioritise safeguarding and wellbeing training Context: DCCs face major risks around online safety and wellbeing. Creating topical toolkits for DCCs and widening access to enabling tools, support and specialist advice would enable them to mitigate these risks.	Create toolkits, such as the CALM creator mental health toolkit, on: - Fundamentals of online safety, privacy and managing public exposure - Resilience, burnout and wellbeing for solo DCCs - Facilitate peer-led networks to share practical approaches	- Provide training on managing online harassment, privacy and burnout - Provide training on managing employee wellbeing for DCCs leading teams, adapting programmes such as Film + TV Charity's mental health training - Provide access to specialist advice through clinics with experts	Provide training on considerations of exposure to wider audiences when transitioning into on-screen film and television roles
4. Improve navigation of DCC learning provision by curating trusted resources Context: Many DCC learning resources already exist. Creating a navigable repository of kitemarked resources, aligned to the taxonomy and DCC categories and informed by sector feedback, would help DCCs to use these most effectively.	- Curate entry-level resources from video sharing platforms and trusted sector experts - Ensure these resources align with this study's Skills Taxonomy (and subsequent updates) - Review the resources regularly as platforms, tools and audiences evolve, with direct feedback from DCCs	- Signpost more advanced resources - Provide clear tags to ensure resources are at the appropriate professional/commercial development level - Ensure these resources align with this study's Skills Taxonomy (and subsequent updates) - Review the resources regularly as platforms, tools and audiences evolve, with direct feedback from DCCs	- Provide clear mapping and signposting of film and television sector-relevant training and pathways for DCCs - Utilise existing film and television resources already created and curated by ScreenSkills and other screen sector organisations
5. Develop the DCC skills base through accredited, modular micro-credentials Context: Formal training provision is seen as often too slow moving and generic. Relevant skills and training bodies can support DCCs in developing a wide range of skills through a practical, agile and sector relevant micro-credentials framework, developed in consultation with DCCs and sector representatives.	Create modules on: - The fundamentals of creative ideation and storytelling for digital platforms, as well as using AI tools - Platform basics for YouTube, TikTok and Instagram, including analytics and audience-building - Creating distinct tracks for DCCs with and without prior film and television experience	- Develop more advanced modules targeted at established DCCs, designed to build upon the basic micro-credentials so that modules can be stacked - Tailor content to specialised digital production team roles rather than generalist individuals	Create modules on: - Production and post production essentials for film & TV, including adapting content from digital formats - Develop these in collaboration with film & TV sector professionals - Provide recognised film and television sector training credits (e.g., ScreenSkills training passport)

7. Appendix

7.1. Survey Details

Figure 16 outlines the DCC survey questions, along with response count and key themes.

Figure 16 – SPI Survey Questions and Response Themes

SURVEY QUESTION	RESPONDENT COUNT	RESPONSE THEMES
<i>Where are you based?</i>	20	London and the South East of England were the most common locations for DCCs surveyed, but other locations included Scotland, Wales, South West of England, Yorkshire and the Humber and Northern Ireland
<i>Is being a Digital Content Creator your primary or secondary profession?</i>	20	There was a mostly even split between respondents pursuing digital content as a primary (i.e., sole or main form of income) vs a secondary profession (i.e., supplementary form of income)
<i>What genre(s) of content do you create?</i>	20	There is a wide array of genres, including education, comedy, beauty, fashion and lifestyle, animal content, gaming, music, and art
<i>What platform(s) do you create content for?</i>	20	DCCs create content across multiple video-sharing platforms, although the most common were TikTok, Instagram and YouTube. Facebook, Twitch and Snapchat were also mentioned
<i>On the platform where you have the most active followers/subscribers, what is your follower/subscriber count?</i>	20	DCCs have a broad range of follower/subscriber counts from those with fewer than 10,000 to over 1 million, nano and micro creators (i.e., fewer than 10,000) were most common
<i>How long have you been creating digital content for?</i>	20	DCCs had a broad range of experiences, ranging from less than 1 year of experience to experienced DCCs with 10+ years of experience. 4 – 6 years was the most common length of experience
<i>What motivated you to pursue a career in Digital Content Creation?</i>	20	Most common motivations for DCCs included sharing/building a community around a passion or interest, developing creative skills and generating an income. DCCs were also motivated to promote their personal/business brand and provide representation for their background and identity, as well as to help step into the entertainment industry
<i>What are the most critical technical skills for creating Digital Content?</i>	20	Editing, video recording, pre-production (e.g., planning and logistics), and audio recording were all highlighted by most respondents as critical technical skills
<i>What are the most critical creative skills for creating Digital Content?</i>	20	Writing/storytelling, ideation, and performing were highlighted by most respondents as critical creative skills
<i>What are the most critical business skills for creating Digital Content?</i>	20	Understanding content creation (e.g., platforms and algorithms), marketing (e.g., personal branding and positioning), and to a lesser extent, channel management (e.g., scheduling, community management) were highlighted by respondents as critical business skills
<i>What are the most critical interpersonal (relabelled as transversal) skills for creating Digital Content?</i>	20	Resilience, communication, collaboration, networking and giving/receiving feedback were highlighted as critical interpersonal (transversal) skills for DCCs

SURVEY QUESTION	RESPONDENT COUNT	RESPONSE THEMES
<i>What will be the most critical skills for Digital Content Creators in the future?</i>	20	AI is a critical skill for the future, as well as skills such as resilience, understanding audiences, algorithms and analytics, and time management
<i>Have you worked in film and television production?</i>	20	The majority of DCCs had some form of experience within the film and television sector
<i>How would you describe your level of experience within the film and television sector?</i>	15	Most of these identified as experienced within the sector, while a minority had entry, early, or expert level experience
<i>Which skills do you feel have the greatest cross-sector overlap between Digital Content Creation and film and television?</i>	15	Some overlaps mentioned included production skills such as shooting, editing, directing, ideation, and storytelling/writing, as well as lighting and sound, and time management
<i>How effective has existing training been at developing your skills as a Digital Content Creator?</i>	6-15 (variable due to some N/As)	Peer-learning and mentoring was considered most effective by respondents, followed by film or television-related training and work experience. Film & Television and DCC-related university courses were seen as least effective by those who had undertaken them
<i>What potential training or talent initiatives would be critical to support your career as a Digital Content Creator?</i>	16	DCCs suggest that training such as workshops, focused on practical application and collaborative/peer-based learning, would be critical to support their career. Areas of interest for training included pitching and networking, technical production skills, content strategy and AI
<i>What are the biggest challenges or barriers (either skills related or more widely) in progressing your career as a Digital Content Creator?</i>	16	Barriers included financial and time constraints, IP and legal challenges, changing content trends and inconsistent audience engagement, lack of technical skills and confidence, lack of information, and lack of support networks

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7.3. About Olsberg•SPI

Olsberg•SPI (SPI) is an international Creative Industries consultancy specialising in the global screen sector, providing independent strategic insight and advice to drive sustainable growth across the sector to both public and private clients. Formed in 1992, SPI is among the leading international consultancies in this sector which includes film, television, video games, and digital media. SPI's work includes developing and assessing national strategies and public policies including production incentives; providing analysis in areas like workforce and skills development and studio provision; and economic impact assessments.

SPI's expert independent advice, trusted vision, and proven track record create high levels of new and repeat business from a diverse group of companies and organisations. These include but are not limited to national and sub-national governments; established studios and streamers; facilities and content investors, film commissions, and training and skills development organisations.

For further information, please see the [SPI website](#) and [company brochure](#), or contact Olsberg•SPI Research Analyst Kiera Obi at kiera@o-spi.com

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