

ICDL Saudi Arabia reinforces women-focused training facilities as part of long-term IT literacy strategy

Over 120 ICDL training centers now offer special courses for women

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ICDL Saudi Arabia, the governing body and certification authority of the International Computer Driving License (ICDL) programme in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), has announced that it has recently intensified a country-wide campaign to increase the number of women participants in all ICDL training centres in Saudi Arabia. The move is in line with government efforts to enhance the IT competency of KSA nationals, particularly women who according to recent studies account for a vast majority of an estimated 100 million IT illiterate people in the region.

ICDL Saudi Arabia further revealed that up to 120 out of 300 ICDL accredited training centres in Saudi now offer special training for women. In addition, ICDL Saudi Arabia has also initiated and supported various awareness campaigns around the country, aiming to promote the importance of acquiring IT skills to help improve the career-development prospects of women and subsequently boost their contributions to the country's social and economic development.

Dr. Sulaiman Al-Dhalaan, Consultant, ICDL Saudi Arabia, said: "ICDL's certification program in KSA strongly supports government initiatives to promote computer literacy and enhance the IT skills of citizens and residents, particularly women. We have already achieved significant progress in this respect with educational organisations that are exclusive to women, such as the Princess Noura Bint Abdulrahman University, the first university for girls in Saudi Arabia, which is now increasingly adopting the ICDL standard.

Similarly, we have been working closely with major educational entities that also cater to the larger female population. For instance, King Saud University, Taibah University and AlBaha University, all have large number of female students who enrolled in the ICDL program to obtain the certificate. I can confidently say that there are around seven major universities around the Kingdom today that offer the ICDL program for both female and male students equally."

"Moreover, we have been closely working with several other educational institutions to develop more women-oriented digital proficiency courses as part of our long-term IT literacy strategy. Our ultimate aim is to expand the coverage of our program to include women across all regions of the country. ICDL is confident that this initiative will help dramatically improve the IT skills of women and enable them to easily integrate in the local and international job markets," added Dr. Al-Dhalaan.

ICDL is an integrated digital literacy program recognised worldwide. The program empowers individuals with the essential skills and knowledge of computer and practical use of common desktop applications. The program is based on a recognised global standard acknowledged through testing and proves that the certificate holder has fundamental skills in IT, using the computer and managing files, word processing, spreadsheet, database, presentation, and information and communication (Internet and e-mail). ICDL is endorsed by education ministries, universities and government organisations and it is accredited by more than 168 countries and is available in more than 40 languages.