

## ICDL on its way to becoming a standard in the Ministry of Education and its teaching programme

Pilot project funded by ICDL GCC Foundation and UNESCO graduates teachers and administrators from MOE offices in different emirates

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As part of the continuing co-operation between UAE Ministry of Education and the ICDL GCC Foundation, the governing body of the ICDL programme in the Gulf States and the regional arm of the European Computer Driving License (ECDL), a new batch of ICDL certified ministry's teachers and staff members recently graduated at a ceremony held at the Ministry of Education's offices in Dubai, as a pilot project to implement the ICDL program in the education system nationwide.



UNESCO-UCO and the ICDL GCC Foundation funded the ICDL training and testing for the candidates, who came from different Ministry of Education offices in Ras Al Khaimah, Ajman, Fujairah, Dubai, Eastern Area and Sharjah. The successful candidates were presented the ICDL certificates by his Excellency Mr. Ali Maihed Al Suwaidi, Assistant Undersecretary for Development of Human Resources, Ministry of Education, Mr. Jamil Ezzo, Director General, ICDL GCC Foundation, and Mr. Abdul Qader Rasool, Director, Development of Human Resources Department, Ministry of Education.

This step of cooperation comes under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with the UAE Ministry of Education to implement and incorporate the ICDL, the internationally recognized computer proficiency standard, to develop and improve the basic IT skills of the Ministry's teachers, administration member staff, and General Education Students. The MoU aims to further IT literacy in the UAE and reach an inclusive information society.

"The UAE has been leading the regional IT revolution through a series of pioneering projects. To ensure success, each citizen must be proficient in basic computer skills," said Dr. Sheikha Saif Al Shamsi, Assistant Undersecretary for Educational programmes and Curricula at the UAE Ministry of Education.

The MoU calls also for incorporating ICDL syllabus into the IT teaching curriculum of all public schools in the UAE, establishing a number of accredited ICDL training and test centers at the ministry's schools, creating incentives for candidates, and promoting IT literacy through the ICDL in the UAE.

"It is therefore not only important, but essential to incorporate IT literacy into the school curriculum. This is an initiative that helps teachers use technology while teaching non-IT related subjects, and equips students with the necessary skills and encouraging them to increase the technological input in school-level teaching," Al

Shamsi added.

Mr. Jamil Ezzo, Director General, ICDL GCC Foundation, said: “The continuing corporation between the ICDL GCC Foundation and the UAE MOE is emphasizing the significance of basic computer skills in society and the necessity for all to possess these skills. The MoU with the ministry demonstrates the UAE Government intention to break through the ‘Digital Divide’ and educate people in the UAE in the field of IT, in order to ensure computer literacy throughout the population in the near future.”

“The UAE Ministry of Education's aim to incorporate the ICDL into its computer teaching curriculum in schools ensures that each graduate will possess basic computer skills. As the program is internationally recognized, the ICDL certification will benefit the students wherever they go,” added Ezzo.

The ICDL certification program has achieved remarkable success in the Middle East since its introduction in 2001 by UNESCO Cairo Office. Currently Ministries of Education, Government Universities and education institutions, as well as Government Organizations in the region are adopting the ICDL certification program as the benchmark for their employees’ IT skills.

The Abu Dhabi Education Zone has endorsed the programme by making the ICDL certification mandatory for staff, administrators and teachers. In another development, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum IT Education Project (ITEP) is using the ICDL syllabus and standards to “raise the levels of computer skills in society and industry and provide access to all to the Information Society. Several school teachers and administrators working in the Dubai Educational Zone (DEZ) are now ICDL certified following the recent IT literacy drive launched by H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and UAE Defence Minister.

ECDL/ICDL is the world’s largest vendor-neutral end-user computer skills certification with more than 4.5 million registered candidates. It is internationally recognized as the global benchmark in computer literacy. ECDL/ICDL is currently available in 136 countries available in 36 languages, including Arabic, making it the world’s leading and largest IT literacy certification program.

#### **About ICDL**

International Computer Driving License (ICDL), is an internationally recognized computer proficiency standard that is owned by the European Computer Driving License (ECDL) and introduced by the UNESCO's Cairo Office (UCO) for Arab states in 2001. ICDL is gaining increasing acceptance in the Middle East, with several governments adopting as a requirement to their employees. The ICDL program exists in over 132 countries, and is offered in 32 languages, including Arabic. The programs offered are all based on one standard syllabus and question set. There are more than 15,000 centres worldwide, and over 10 million exams have been taken globally since the launch of the program.

#### **About ICDL GCC Foundation**

ICDL GCC Foundation was created by the ECDL Foundation, the not-for-profit global governing body of the ECDL and ICDL member countries dedicated to helping raise the general level of computer skills in societies and providing access for all to the information society, to serve the to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) States with their implementation of ICDL and for providing them with localised support to ensure quality of ICDL programs. The ICDL-GCC Foundation is the sole ICDL licensee and accreditation body that is responsible to support ICDL accredited training and testing centres in the GCC. It also acts as the reviewing and approving body for the local adaptation of ICDL programs, including authorizing the sale of Arabic ICDL content and testing material in the region.

**In the news**

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