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Public library to train, test learners for ICDL

UMM SUQEIM LIBRARY IS THE FIRST TO BE ACCREDITED IN THE GULF

By a staff reporter

DUBAI — Dubai Municipality and the International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL) Foundation has signed an agreement yesterday approving the Umm Suqeim Library as the first accredited public library in the Gulf region for ICDL training and testing.

The ICDL certifies that the holder is fully competent in the use of a personal computer and common computer applications and knows the essential concepts of IT.

Mohammed Jassim Al Eraidi, Head of Public Libraries Section and Rich MacLaren, Programme Director ICDL for GCC countries, signed the agreement at the Umm Suqeim Library, which is now fully equipped to function as the accredited ICDL centre.

Addressing mediapersons after the signing ceremony, Al Eraidi said the objective of this initiative is to spread computer literacy in the community.

"As a service institution we feel that it is very important to support the local community, especially the young generation, to have basic knowledge of



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computers," he said.

Al Eraidi added that the Unesco declaration on public libraries issued in 1994 clearly underscores the significant role of a public library in spreading knowledge, eradicating illiteracy and helping the local community members to develop their skills in the fields of information technology and computers.

He noted that there is also a huge increase in the

number of people using computers and Internet in this region.

"Statistics show that Dubai's population is expected to reach 1.6 million by 2008 and more than one third of that population is expected to own a personal computer. In this context, the role of a public library is highly significant in imparting basic computer knowledge," he said.

The ICDL syllabus is

unique in that it has been designed to be entirely vendor-independent. This gives candidates the flexibility and freedom to acquire these core skills and confidently apply them in any software environment they may be required to use. The ICDL is a test of practical skills and competencies and consists of seven separate modules covering computer theory and practice. Module

1 is a theoretical test of computing knowledge at a general level and Modules 2-7 are practical skills such as using a computer and managing files, word processing, spreadsheets, database, presentation, and information and communication.

When candidates register to start the ICDL certification process they receive a skills card on which their progress through the seven tests is recorded.

These tests can be attempted in any order and at any time and must be successfully completed within a maximum duration of three years. Each successfully completed test is endorsed on an ICDL skills card. Only an approved test centre can carry out testing and issue skills cards. This timeframe may be changed from time to time for specific programs or requirements.

When tests for all seven modules are successfully completed and the Skills Card is endorsed by the Test Centre, it is sent to ICDL GCC foundation and a personalised certificate (licence) is issued.