



Press Release

Al Ittihad Schools in the UAE to adopt ICDL curriculum

Landmark agreement to empower private education students with essential IT skills

January 31, 2012

The Al Ittihad group of private schools in the UAE has announced that it is partnering with the ICDL GCC Foundation on the adoption of the International Computer Driving Licence curriculum, the renowned global computer literacy initiative, throughout its educational network. The agreement marks a major step towards integrating essential Information Technology components into the academic programs of major private sector educational institutions throughout the region.

Investments into private sector education throughout the Gulf have been significantly increasing over the past three years and are in fact expected to reach USD 3.5 billion this year. With its expanding network covering key areas in Abu Dhabi and Dubai, Al Ittihad represents an excellent seedbed for preparing private education students for life within a digital society. The school's Jumeirah branch was the first to introduce and deliver the ICDL curriculum, while Al Ittihad School-Abu Dhabi & Mamzar branches have just recently completed their center accreditation. The partnership with Al Ittihad also broadens the regional presence of ICDL, a platform-independent computer literacy certification program with standards jointly developed by leading European computer societies.

Under the ICDL curriculum, Al Ittihad students will acquire practical proficiency in commonly-used software tools under popular packages. They will have to pass modules on Basic IT Concepts, Computer Usage and File Management, Word Processing, Spreadsheets, Databases, Presentation Tools, and Information and Communication in order to earn the ICDL certification. Al Ittihad and the ICDL GCC Foundation plan to eventually offer the program to staff and parents as well, in line with the Foundation's goal of empowering all members of society with basic information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

Commenting on their joint cooperation with the ICDL GCC Foundation, Nihad Al Shamsi, The Director General of Al Ittihad Private School-Jumeirah, said: “We use a holistic approach that involves intellectual, physical, social, and technological skill building to nourish the growth of our students at all stages so that they are prepared for higher education and life’s challenges. In our school, the ICDL certification programme was chosen as a path to help our students reach their potential. We offer the ICDL programme for students in grades 8 and 9 as a compulsory course so that they can learn to use technology in all their subjects. The ICDL programme successfully enriches the students’ digital skills within a modern world that is experiencing a digital evolution.”

“We are proud to have entered into a genuine partnership with the Foundation and look forward to adopting its programmes. This move is in line with our particular focus on developing computer skills and proficiency among our students at all levels, something which we began a few years back. We intend to integrate the ICDL certification program into our ICT curricula to provide our students with digital knowledge under international standards and with the support of the Foundation,” said Hanan Hasan, ICT Coordinator at Al Ittihad School-Abu Dhabi.

“We are deeply proud of our partnership with Al Ittihad schools as it reiterates our part-taking in the educational transformation occurring in our region. While we enjoy the strong support of regional ministries of education in implementing ICDL in public schools and universities, we believe private institutions play just as important a role, giving us a platform for innovative ideas that help students and teachers adapt to 21st century education.,” said Jamil Ezzo, Director General of ICDL GCC Foundation.

ICDL GCC Foundation, the governing body and the certification authority of the International Computer Driving License program in the Gulf States and Iraq, has played a huge role in generating awareness for, and adoption of, the ICDL program throughout the region. The programme is recognized by over 22,000 educational institutions around the world of which 45 across the GCC region and is highly recommended by the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States. The Foundation believes that ICT proficiency should be acquired at an early age, as evidenced by its annual Summer Camps which teach computer skills using ICDL concepts to youths.

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