ECDL FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER

HIGHLIGHTS OF THIS EDITION

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New ICDL Recognised by the Queensland Studies Authority (QSA), Australia

WELCOME TO THE DECEMBER 2013 ISSUE OF THE ECDL FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER.

ECDL / ICDL IN ACTION AROUND THE WORLD

ICDL TO BE IMPLEMENTED ACROSS 4,000 SCHOOLS IN INDONESIA

In October 2013, the ICDL Asia Accreditation Partner for Indonesia, YPI Foundation, signed a MoU with BRI Management, (through its corporate social entity, the Ah Nahl Foundation), to fund the implementation of ICDL across 4,000 schools. Initially, funding will be provided for 20 Candidates from each of the 4,000 Islamic schools across Indonesia. YPI Foundation expects that almost 80,000 candidates will avail of ICDL Training and almost 560,000 tests will be completed.

BRI Management is a government bank with substantial net profit, which has branches across Indonesia, including remote areas of the country. Twenty percent of BRI Management's profits are allocated to corporate social responsibility through the Ah Nahl Foundation. In March 2013, ICDL Asia's Accreditation Partner, YPI Foundation signed an MOU with the Ministry of Religious Affairs to implement the ICDL programme across 4,0000 Islamic Schools in Indonesia, and thanks to funding from BRI Management this has become possible.

NEW ICDL RECOGNISED BY THE QUEENSLAND STUDIES AUTHORITY (QSA), AUSTRALIA

The Queensland Studies Authority has recognised thirteen ICDL Modules. These modules are recognised under the 'Enrichment Learning Courses' and they contribute one credit each towards a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE), which is a certificate awarded to students completing their secondary schooling. A maximum of 8 credits from Enrichment courses can count towards a student's QCE, where a minimum of 20 credits is required.

The new recognition agreement between the QSA and ICDL Asia has just been finalised. The updated list of study is now live on the Queensland Studies Authority (QSA) website under the 'Business and IT' section.

ICDL SYRIA IN THE FACE OF CRISIS

The ICDL programme in Syria has been facing a lot of difficulties in the last two years because of the instability of the political situation. Around 60% of the Accredited Centres are closed or destroyed, 10% are reallocated to other safe areas. The number of candidates has dropped by 80% since 2010. The main challenges that the Accredited centres and the National Operator are facing on

a daily basis are power outages, internet disconnection, and most importantly the safety issue of the ICDL employees when moving from one location to another.

All these difficulties and challenges have not prevented ICDL Syria from moving forward in accomplishing its mission of spreading IT literacy and knowledge in Syrian society. ICDL Syllabus 5 was introduced at the beginning of 2012, a new Automated Test System was adopted and new courseware materials were printed under the supervision of Syrian Computer Society (SCS). More than 10 new test centres were accredited by ICDL Syria during 2013 and more than 15,000 new candidates joined the program during the last year, with an average success rate of 72%.

Unfortunately, funding is currently becoming an additional important challenge for the development of the ICDL Programme in Syria, even though SCS have tried to keep the prices as low as possible.

ICDL CERTIFICATION FOR AFGHAN MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

On 27 November, twenty employees of the Afghan Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE) received their ICDL certificates. Dr. Obaidulllah Obaid, the Afghan Minister of Higher Education, presented the certificates to the trainees. The Minister congratulated the graduates and discussed the importance of ICDL training and certification in terms of developing the professional capacity of the governmental employees as well as the internationally recongnised value of ICDL Certification. Since the project began, 500 MoHE employees have received their ICDL certificates.

THAI CAMPUS HOLDS ANNUAL ICDL COMPETITION

Sripathum University, Thailand, held its annual ICDL competition in November for the fifth year. Twenty schools in the area participated, each school represented by two students. The event was sponsored by the university, G-Able (Thailand's leading systems integration and professional services firm), and ICDL Asia's Accreditation Partner in Thailand, Plan-IT Consultants. Each participant took two modules, Word Processing and Online Essentials, and the top 3 candidates each received a trophy. Overall, the competition was a great success and has helped raise the profile of ICDL in rural Thailand. Congratulations to the winners.

NEW TEST CENTRE IN CHILE PROMOTING YOUTH DEVELOPMENT THROUGH ICDL

ICAP (Instituto de Capacitación Profesional), located in Santiago de Chile, has recently become a new ICDL Accredited Test Centre. Recognised by SENCE (National Training and Employment of Chile), ICAP is currently working on a digital skills, community development programme, for young people between the ages of 16 and 19 in the region of Antofagasta, in the Taltal municipality. In the first week of December, 53 candidates took the ICDL certification, successfully completing four ICDL Base modules, achieving global recognition of their skills that will benefit them in their future education and in finding employment.

ICAP will continue this programme in the Antofagasta Region and the Metropolitan Region of Santiago in the new year.

ICDL GCC CALLS ON GOVERNMENT AND ACADEMIC SECTORS TO RAISE AWARENESS ON INTERNET SAFETY

During its 4th Annual Recognition Event to acknowledge entities supporting ICDL's corporate social responsibilities (CSR) initiatives, ICDL GCC announced its 2014 vision for digital awareness and internet safety as two of its key strategic priorities.

ICDL certifications were granted to 4,400 youths during the regional summer camps held in July and August 2013 as part of ICDL GCC's CSR efforts, in collaboration with more than 42 organisations from various industries. The Recognition Event was attended by high-profile officials from government bodies, educational entities, sponsors from various sectors such as banking, aviation, IT, entertainment, and media. Winners of the annual ICDL regional awards for best practices were also announced, chosen from among 16 candidates, following a poll carried out by the ICDL jury panel. The Abu Dhabi Systems & Information Centre received top honors, while Sultan Qaboos University and Bahrain Institute of Banking Studies tied for second place.

ICDL GCC LAUNCHES NEW ICDL PROFILE

During a launch ceremony held at the Hilton Dubai Jumeirah Resort and attended by 300 ICDL Accreditation partners from across the GCC and Iraq, ICDL GCC launched ICDL Profile including four new modules – Computer Essentials, Online Essentials, Project Planning and Online Collaboration – and offered guidance on how to apply the revised structure and the additional modules. The update will benefit over a million current candidates, including those who completed their ICDL certification since the programme's launch in the GCC in 2001.

Jamil Ezzo, Director General of ICDL GCC Foundation, said: "We understand that everyone uses technology for different purposes, which is why we developed the new structure and format of the ICDL certification programme. It is an important step towards staying relevant in this dynamic world. It will enable us to present a fresh and contemporary offering to both candidates and organisations to develop their digital knowledge, efficiencies and experiences, while facilitating their ultimate goal of lifelong learning."

2020 COMMUNICATIONS TRUST ENCOURAGES DIGITAL JOURNEY TO ICDL THROUGH THE KIWI SKILLS INITIATIVE

ICDL Asia Accreditation partner, The 2020 Communications Trust, has re-signed as accreditation partner for New Zealand, effective from 1 December. Joey Chua, the Partner Compliance Manager for ICDL Asia, visited New Zealand during November to work with the Trust in migrating to the New ICDL, under the KiwiSkills initiative, and implementing new operational procedures. While in New Zealand, Joey met with the Trust's 'Computers in Homes' coordinators at their quarterly hui (meeting) in Masterton.

'Computers in Homes' is an introductory digital literacy programme for parents with school-aged children in low income communities. The programme provides 20 hours of training as well as a refurbished computer, a subsidised internet connection and technical support for 12 months. Computers in Homes families are encouraged to continue on their digital journeys with the Trust's Stepping UP and ICDL programmes. There are 18 regional Computers in Homes coordinators who support communities throughout the country. Ten of these have already completed ICDL modules and are Accredited Testers.

ICDL EGYPT INTRODUCES MOBILE TESTING

In November, ICDL Egypt introduced mobile testing with the Arab Academy for Science, Technology & Maritime Transport in the Alexandria and Port Said governorates. Mobile testing brings ICDL testing to candidates in remote areas where there are no permanent adeqate facilities.

NEW ICDL ACCREDITED TEST CENTRE IN TUVALU

The ICT Department within the Ministry of Communications & Transport in Tuvalu has chosen ICDL certification programmes to support its mandate to provide computer training to the Tuvalu Public Service.

During 2014, the ICT Department expects to register 200 Tuvalu public service officers. Following full government approval for ICDL training and certification across the whole public service, ICDL should then be available to approximately 860 staff.

ECDL IN EDUCATION: WHAT THE EXPERTS SAY

There's never been a better time to do ECDL / ICDL in school, or better reasons to do so.

We recently asked some experts and partners on their experience of ECDL in second and third level education.

Here's what they said:

"Students benefit from ECDL in their mid-teens as it ensures that by the time they leave school they are digitally literate and better placed to gain employment. It is also the perfect age to take ECDL as it teaches them to access and use IT safely and appropriately."
Richard French
BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT
United Kingdom

"At this stage in their schooling, students are asked to carry out more complex projects, work in teams, consider, explore, analyse, solve and report on real-world scenarios and challenges. To do this effectively they need to use computers in a more 'grown up' way. Through ECDL they gain the skills required to work in a more collaborative and productive way."

"Teachers tell us that as a result of doing ECDL, students are more focused in other classes and take a more structured approach to completing school work across all subjects. Students tell us that when applying for summer jobs, employers either request or take particular note of ECDL on their CVs."
Linda Keane
ICS Skills, Ireland

"We offer our students ECDL because there is no compulsory computer science teaching at the lower level. Nowadays, basic knowledge on computers is presumed at secondary schools and in almost every profession. The regular standard tests in the fourth classes show the flaws in basic knowledge that those who do not take ECDL have. With the ECDL certificate, students can prove that they meet the standard."
Mag. Roland Pötzlberger
Computer science teacher
BRG Bad Ischl, Austria

"ICT is a tool that influences all parts of society: ICT policy is a cross-sectoral subject. The ECDL programme is an important contribution for both employers and employees to be able to document their skills and to deliver education throughout the workplace."
Kristin Halvorsen
Minister of Education, Norway

"ECDL is known as 'the qualification I need to help me get a job or get improve my job prospects'. Anywhere in Europe 'here's my ECDL' is understood, it's a good standard. When employers see the qualification they see it as something with gravitas. I believe that IT is the third essential skill. People talk about numeracy and literacy, which are really important, but IT is becoming the third essential skill qualification that you need to have."
David Mather
Learndirect & IT Commercial Manager
Bridgend College, Wales

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH AND REPORTS

GROWING DEMAND FOR ICT WORKERS MAY RESULT IN SKILLS SHORTAGE, CONFIRMS NEW EU REPORT

According to the European Vacancy Monitor, the number of employees working in the ICT sector has increased since 2008 in spite of the crisis, while at the same time the number of ICT graduates declined between 2004 and 2011. The number of ICT jobs increased in nineteen countries. The highest growth percentage were recorded in Greece (up by 30%) Belgium (27%), Estonia (17%), Cyprus (15%), and Luxembourg (13%). The report also indicates that the highest penetration of ICT employees is found in Northern Member States, and that 22 percent of ICT employees were aged 15-29 in 2012.

NEW STUDY FINDS THAT 250,000 E-INCLUSION ACTORS OPERATE IN EUROPE

Over 250,000 organisations are estimated to be operating in the e-inclusion sector in the European Union (EU), according to a new study which mapped e-inclusions actors in the EU. The study findings highlight the role of e-inclusion actors, such as ECDL Foundation, which are at the forefront of digital inclusion and empowerment, and are of critical importance in today's digital society.

A wide spectrum of e-inclusion organisations are currently providing ICT-enabled and other social services across the EU. Most of these actors tend to be micro-organisations employing 10 people or fewer. Moreover, the e-inclusion sector is largely funded from public budgets, either directly or indirectly. The study was conducted by the European Commission's DG CONNECT and the Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (JRC-IPTS).
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