**King Saud University adopts ICDL program as a qualification for preparatory-year students**
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**Abstract (Summary)**
KSU has revealed that the preparatory year will serve as a training and testing period for students to acquire the ICDL certificate, which is recognised locally and internationally. KSU has also disclosed that other higher education institutions, including the Princess Noura bint Abdulrahman University, the first university for girls in Saudi Arabia, and University of Tabuk have already implemented the ICDL program.

"KSU's move to adopt the ICDL program is an important step that will encourage other universities and academic institutions in Saudi Arabia to be more actively involved in promoting IT literacy through the ICDL program. This initiative has received a positive feedback from university students because ICDL has opened several opportunities for them to improve their proficiency in their respective areas of expertise," said Dr. Sulaiman Al-Dhalaan, Managing Director, ICDL Saudi Arabia.

Underscoring the eagerness of the Deanship of Student Affairs to leverage the students' skills, the Centre of Computer and Hobbies in KSU, in cooperation with ICDL Saudi Arabia, has subsidised up to around 50 per cent of the total cost of examinations for ICDL's seven modules, which it has been offering within the university.

**Full Text** (608 words)

King Saud University adopts ICDL program as a qualification for preparatory-year students

Step aims to enhance digital competency of all university students

King Saud University (KSU) has adopted the ICDL standard as a benchmark of digital literacy for first-year students of the university and the educational entities it supervises. The move aims to equip students with basic computer and internet skills, allowing them to take advantage of modern technology to enhance learning and eventually improve their prospects in the labour market.

KSU has revealed that the preparatory year will serve as a training and testing period for students to acquire the ICDL certificate, which is recognised locally and internationally. KSU has also disclosed that other higher education institutions, including the Princess Noura bint Abdulrahman University, the first university for girls in Saudi Arabia, and University of Tabuk have already implemented the ICDL program.

Princess Noura bint Abdulrahman University has collaborated with King Saud University in offering the ICDL certificate for the preparatory year to help the students develop their digital knowledge, in order to enhance their future career prospects; this in turn will help them play an active role in the socioeconomic growth of the Kingdom.

University of Tabuk has likewise adopted the ICDL program for preparatory-year students to improve the digital competency of all students in the university. The adoption of the ICDL standard also seeks to help create new generations of IT-competent graduates who are capable of keeping up with the rapid pace of development and can easily integrate into the regional and international labour markets. The move also takes advantage of modern technology in providing University of Tabuk students the skills and knowledge required to help develop the Saudi society promote social development and support the national economy.

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"We have full confidence in the ability of universities and educational institutions to promote and cultivate digital awareness among the youth and ultimately accelerate the digital transformation of the Kingdom. Moreover, we look forward to cooperating with other governmental and educational institutions in Saudi Arabia to support the government's goal to build a knowledge-based society," he added.

Underscoring the eagerness of the Deanship of Student Affairs to leverage the students' skills, the Centre of Computer and Hobbies in KSU, in cooperation with ICDL Saudi Arabia, has subsidised up to around 50 per cent of the total cost of examinations for ICDL's seven modules, which it has been offering within the university.

In addition, KSU has also established an Approved ICDL Training and Testing Centre for the visually impaired students and has provided qualified staff and administrators to manage the specialised centre.

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.

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