

South Korean Universities - University Capacity Building Project

Background and Aims

The Korean ICT certification's main market has been concentrated in the college student sector for several decades. Moreover, the Ministry of Education of Korea continually increases governmental support to universities for promoting and facilitating employment among students.

For these reasons, Korea Productivity Centre (KPC), the South Korean Government Agency responsible for national economic development, has been leveraging government funds which allow for the creation of what is called the 'University Capacity Building' project.

Since early 2010, the aim has been to establish ICDL as a vocational training programme in universities, with the objective of equipping students with the skills needed to maximise their employability in the globalised economy.

Project Description

A government subsidy of KRW515 billion (approx. \$430 million) was set aside for the 'University Capacity Building' project (including junior colleges) in 2010. All funding is provided in block grants to 165 universities excelling in pre-determined formula indices, such as: the percentage of employment among the college graduates, excellence in vocational training programmes etc.

KPC has been proposing ICDL certification as a vocational programme to the funded universities with the aim of allocating their budget for ICDL certification. It is highly practical and suitable for universities to accept ICDL certification as one of the project indices because they need to submit a certain result/return on investment which can be measured by the government.

The Suitability of ICDL for the 'University Capacity Building' Project

Using ICDL certification as a benchmark makes it possible for all stakeholders in the project – students, universities, and the Ministry providing the funds – to have an independent verification that the deployment of the taxpayers' funds achieved its stated purpose, and additionally to be able to compare results to international norms.

Impact

More than 50 universities initiated ICDL certification courses for their students, supported with certified tutors and the courseware by KPC. Most of them are expected to continue carrying out ICDL certification courses in future. To date, more than 23,000 students have been tested in ICDL.

Demand for ICDL in the universities is on the rise because ICDL certification is widely seen as a suitable training course across the funded universities. KPC will expand its activities to no less than 100 universities in Korea through the 'University Capacity Building' project.