

# **A Look into the Integration of the ICDL Program into the Workplace: It's a Team Thing!**

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## **Abstract**

The concept of lifelong learning is not new; it is seen by many as providing 'second chances' to adult learners to update basic skills and to also make available opportunities to improve skills to more advanced levels. Many second chance learners may often carry out their learning in combination with their current employment, in doing so creating an important cooperative experience for the learner, employer and the educator. Learning outcomes for work integrated learning have to be both transparent and pertinent. Delivery and workplace assessment needs to become much more evident, open, and flexible, so that opportunities can truly be tailored to the needs of the learner and to get a 'best fit' to integrate their learning into both their work and family lives. The learning should be relevant and meaningful and most importantly, be of use in the learner's real world to develop lifelong learning skills. In October 2004, the Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT) introduced the International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL) program as a means of targeting learners who would benefit from both the content and the delivery mechanism. The qualification consists of seven computer related modules, equivalent to levels 2 and 3 on the NZQA framework. The course is mostly self directed, the learner's study at home, in their workplace or at EIT centers by the way of a fully interactive CDROM which contains lessons, practical tasks and practice test questions. Learners have a formal induction on an EIT campus and are contacted throughout their study by the ICDL program coordinator. Each module has a test which is also delivered and assessed via a computer. The entire syllabus is written by industry specialists in both Finland and Ireland. This paper traces the history of the ICDL qualification in both New Zealand and internationally. The paper details the experiences (positives, negatives and problems encountered) of work integrated learning from the perspective of both employees and employers. It discusses the particular challenges and issues faced by Assessors at EIT to motivate work based learners to stay focused and committed to eventually achieve. Findings and further areas of research will be presented and identified in the paper stemming from research carried out with learners, employers and instructors of the ICDL program.

## **Introduction to Lifelong Learning**

The concept of Lifelong Learning is not new; it is seen by many as providing "second chances" to adult learners to update basic skills and to also make available opportunities to improve skills to more advanced levels. Many second chance learners may often carry out their learning in combination with their current employment, in doing so creating an important cooperative experience for the learner, employer and the educator.

The connection between work integrated learning and cooperative learning is the main focus of this paper. A clear definition of cooperative education is mentioned in Susanne Taylor's (2002) paper sub-headed 'Reverse Cooperative Education', states "Cooperative education typically occurs when the learner is placed into the actual working environment" (p. 45), she goes on further to state that WACE (World Association for Cooperative Education) defines "cooperative education as work integrated learning combined with classroom learning with learning in the workplace" (p. 45).

Lifelong Learning is not some new educational system; people have always been lifelong learners. From the moment of birth, people learn. Socrates (470-399 BC) believed that occupational, professional and craft training was modeled on the transmission of knowledge. Paul Woodruff, in a chapter in *Philosophers in Education* (p. 15), mentions that "Socrates practice of philosophy is an education for everyone" and that "education as Socrates conceives it is a lifelong pursuit." He further expands the acquisition of occupational skills as "Exactly how one ancient shoemaker trained another we will never know but it is easy to imagine that the master shoemakers simply showed their

apprentice how to make shoes. Letting them practice the craft and correcting them as necessary” (p. 25). A forerunner of today’s modern apprenticeship scheme?

Plato, a student of Socrates, (427– 347 BC) in his dialogue *Politeia* (Republic), written in approximately 390 BC, stated that, “learning is the discovery of pre-existing knowledge.” However, the drive for continued lifelong learning as we know and understand it today, originated in the early part of the nineteenth century. The move for people to take responsibility for their own learning and education began in Scotland and England in the early 1800s. This was at the time of the industrial revolution, where the workers revolted against technology, particularly the steam engine. Dissenters found themselves barred from education. Because of this lack of opportunity for education, the working classes established self help groups where those who knew taught those who didn’t. This may be the first time where the working classes were ‘allowed’ to become educated; education at the time was seen as a luxury for the upper classes of society only. These self-help groups still thrive in particular areas in the UK.

Lindman (1926) in ‘The Meaning of Adult Education’ touched upon a number of key themes associated with lifelong education. First, “education is life” and thus, has no distinctly beginning or end. Second, “adult education should be non-vocational” and “we should start with situations and not subjects.” Lindman suggests that a syllabus for adults should be focused on the student’s needs and interests. He believed that textbooks were too constraining and confining, and should only be used as a secondary source of information. Lindeman believes that “experience is the adult learner’s living textbook” (1926, p. 7).

Basil Yeaxlee, in his book, *Lifelong Education*, (Smith, 1996) states that: “Adult education, rightly interpreted is as inseparable from normal living as food and physical exercise. Life, to be vivid, strong and creative, demands constant reflection upon experience. Actions should be guided by wisdom. Work and leisure are blended in perfect exercise of body, mind and spirit.” He also states that: “Much adult education will never know itself as such, and will be recognized only by leaders and teachers of real insight. It will go on in clubs, churches, cinemas, theatres, concert rooms, trade unions, political societies, and in the homes of the people where there are books, newspapers, music, wireless sets, workshops, gardens and groups of friends.”

John Dewey and Eduard Lindman were personal friends, both shared strong views for social justice, in an interview transcript, Dewey suggested “that the purpose of education should be to gain knowledge useful for real life and for building moral character and growth of the whole person: intellectually, personally, socially, and professionally. He saw that education must represent life, and it must be available to every member of society” (1999). Malcom Knowles, seen by many as the mentor of modern educational philosophy suggested that most learners want to be responsible for their own lives and learning, that they bring experience to learning activities, they want learning to apply to real-life situations and are motivated by intrinsic motivators.

Moving to 1996, in the UNESCO commissioned report, ‘Learning: The Treasure Within’ by Jacques Delors (1996), a report on education for the 21st century calls for lifelong education, involving not only the school, but also the home, the workplace, the trade unions or the army, which can also educate and train. It further mentions the need to, “take schooling out of its cramping context, and go beyond the limits of compulsory education” (Delores, 1996, p. 51). The report mentions that “Not only must it adapt to changes in the nature of work, but it must also constitute a continuous process of forming whole human beings – their knowledge and aptitudes, as well as the critical faculty and the ability to act. It should enable people to develop awareness of themselves and their environment and encourage them to play their social role at work and in the community” (Delores, 1996, p. 20). It goes on to say:

Lifelong education is, of course, a safeguard against the most painful form of exclusion – exclusion due to ignorance. The changes occurring in the information and communication technologies – sometimes referred to as the computer revolution – increase the risk of this form of exclusion, with the result that education has a crucial role to play in the run-up to the twenty-first century. (Delores, 1996, p. 52)

## **History of the European Computer Driving Licence**

The demands of the 21st century workplace require a new and different assortment of skills and abilities for anyone who wants to compete in the global marketplace or improve career prospects. The workplace has become a high-functioning, results driven environment where everyone must be able to make decisions, react quickly and take responsibility for the quality of their work. To succeed in this ever evolving environment, employees need the multiplicity of academic and technical skills and are 'digitally literate'. Employees are also expected to understand and use information technology to a fairly high level. However, it could be said that employees' ability to use this technology is often taken for granted.

Hence, in the late 1980s, the Finnish Computer Society, in conjunction with the business community there, set up a focus group to examine computer literacy in Finland. This focus group developed the concept of testing an individuals' competence at using computers in much the same way as competence at driving motor cars was tested. Thus was born the concept of the 'driving test' for PCs. This resulted in the establishment of the Computer Driving Licence (CDL) in Finland in 1994. Following this, the Council of European Professional Informatics Societies (CEPIS), a non-profit organization whose primary objective is to evaluate the impact that informatics has on employment, business and society established a task force, to examine ways of raising IT skills levels in industries across Europe. This task force's remit was to explore the feasibility of adopting the Computer Driving Licence (CDL) as a pan-European qualification. Between 1995 and 1996; the ECDL was translated into 10 different languages and piloted in 10 countries. Sweden was the first country to launch the qualification as the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL).<sup>i</sup> A common syllabus was agreed and in January 1997, and the European Computer Driving Licence Foundation (ECDL-F), a European Union Commission Initiative with its headquarters in Dublin, was established as another not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping to raise the general level of computer skills. The ECDL-F is the global governing body and licensing authority of the ECDL worldwide. From its original formation by the European computer societies, the ECDL-F has broadened and strengthened its computer society links and now numbers over 40 computer societies worldwide.

The ECDL/ICDL is now available in available in 140 countries and translated into 36 languages around the world. To date, over 30 million tests taken through a network of 20,000 test centers worldwide. Test centers and courseware providers provide training and testing services and training materials and are under Licence to the relevant computer society who are in turn, licensed by the ECDL-F. Each country must accept the certification of the other countries.

## **The International Computer Driving Licence in New Zealand**

In a recent personal communication with Arthur Keble, CEO of Computing NZ Ltd, he stated that in 2001 the New Zealand Computer Society Inc decided to introduce the ICDL into New Zealand. As there were, and still are, commercial risks involved, the task was given to Computing NZ Ltd the wholly owned subsidiary of the NZCS which handles all its commercial activities. The ICDL in New Zealand is part of ICDL Asia Pacific Ltd which has been based in the UK. At the time of writing ICDLAP is in the process of moving to Singapore from where it will be able to supply more timely support being in the same time zone as New Zealand for 4 hours everyday. From a few registrants (approx. 500) in 2001 the program in subsequent years has seen the figure grow to over 18,500 by 2006. Most of these are secondary school students with polytechnics, governments and commercial organizations making up the rest. Recently there has been a marked increase in interest shown by corporates and government agencies as the realization dawns that not everyone is competent with a desktop computer.

### *Features of the Qualification*

Syllabus content has been developed by ECDL-F expert working groups comprised of professionals with wide-ranging specialist IT skills and through consultation with courseware providers and end-

users and is underpinned by documented expert opinion from the worlds leading computer societies and other expert groups.<sup>ii</sup> The quality and relevance of the Syllabus is guaranteed by ECDL-F development processes and by a range of expert input from the world's leading computer societies. The same syllabus is used throughout all 140 countries. The qualification is open to anyone, regardless of age, gender, education, experience or background.

The ICDL syllabus contains skills and knowledge criterion that cover basic knowledge and competence in using a personal computer and common computer applications. Candidates will have to pass all the seven modules to qualify for the ICDL certificate

Module 1: Basic concepts of information technology (IT) - Similar to NZQA US 2780

Module 2: Using the computer and managing files - Similar to NZQA US 2781

Module 3: Word processing - Similar to NZQA US 111

Module 4: Spreadsheets - Similar to NZQA US 2784

Module 5: Databases - Similar to NZQA US 2786

Module 6: Presentations - Similar to NZQA US 5946, and

Module 7: Information and communication - Similar to NZQA US 5941 and 5942.

The qualification is certified by a set of tests, at the computer with automatic evaluation. The duration of test is 45 minutes and consists of 30 – 36 questions. The pass mark for any module is 75%. The tests may be taken in any order at the candidates own pace. The candidate can take all tests at once and no study is necessary, providing the candidate already processes IT skills.

All countries apply the same testing standards. There is no country where the testing is considered 'easy' or 'difficult'.

#### *The ICDL at EIT*

No formal teaching is required as entire course is delivered via a computer application. Content support and mentoring is offered at all EIT centers. The course is delivered via a LAN at EIT centers and via CD ROMS which means students can access the material from their businesses or home. Students receive an enrolment pack, which outlines all the necessary information, further information is re-iterated during their two hour program induction. A formal compulsory induction session is run before the enrolment is processed and ongoing support is available on campus via the community computing facilities. The ICDL application has inbuilt indicators which show whether or not a student is ready to take a test. The testing centre for ICDL is also managed and supported by two test invigilators who both hold the full ICDL certification. Students may elect to take the assessment at any of EIT's locations under the supervision of Test Invigilators. In 2005, 256 ICDL tests were taken with 212 passes and 44 fails. Success rates of 83% with the average pass mark of 92%. Some 15 students completed the full qualification in 2005 and were awarded their certificate.

Based on the results of 2005, it was decided by EIT to investigate the experiences learners had with the ICDL program via pilot study amongst a mixture of those people who are currently enrolled and those who had completed, no emphasis was given to any module or the overall completion rate and it was concluded that the best way to carry this out was via a anonymous mail survey.

### **Methodology**

The research methodology as proposed by Dane (1990) was adopted and took the form of a survey/case study approach. The data were gathered via a survey of the students who had enrolled in the ICDL program. A survey was developed and modified, after administering it on a sample group (see appendix) with the intention of capturing pertinent information relating to their experiences with the program, the support that their employer gave them and other key influences which helped them towards completion of the course. A response rate of 38% was achieved. This figure was quite a surprise, considering my expectations before the study was undertaken. It also highlighted and reinforced some interesting areas which will be outlines in the discussion section. Respondents were

quite happy to complete the survey and telephone conversation even took place to clarify content and register interest in receiving final survey analysis and outputs. One particular party, the New Zealand Computer Society has requested permission to use and publish some of the data. An initial date was set for the return of the survey and a follow-up enquiry was also carried out in order to try and improve the response rate. These data were entered into a statistics package and the results analyzed and concluded on in the following sections.

## **Findings**

The results and discussion points have been separated into three major areas, and provide interesting areas for further research. Conclusions were derived, and follow the discussion section.

### *Sample Characteristics*

Existing knowledge of enrolled students points towards a large proportion of females (70%) as opposed to male learners. Despite this distribution, students are more likely to be of a mature audience that is 45 years of age or more. Of those responding to the survey 68% were female and 32% male. Overall, 68% of respondents were aged 45 years or more. Full details are shown in Table 1

### *The ICDL Qualification*

As part of the survey respondents were asked questions relating to their experiences with the ICDL program in general and a number of interesting outcomes were derived. One of the primary objectives of the ICDL is to quantify the skills already established or learned through the program into an internationally recognized qualification. All of the respondents indicated they used a computer as part of their job, with 79% indicating that the ICDL enabled them to use their computer more efficiently. With this in mind a potential niche may exist to determine what skill set users perceive to have versus the required set of skills needed for their current position.

Closely associated to the respondents being able to use their PC more efficiently, 84% also felt more confident in the operation of their PC and 79% also indicated that they would be interested in doing further information technology based study. As the ICDL program is delivered primarily through a self contained Multimedia CD Rom, one potential draw back to learners could be familiarity with this learning method, surprisingly 53% of respondents indicated they had used this type of training before. The majority of these also felt comfortable with this method of delivery and 47% indicated that this mode was “definitely better than the traditional methods of studying” previously experienced.

### *Employers and Support*

Gaining employer support for such a program is imperative in both integrating the content into the workplace and ensuring successfully outcomes are met. Professional development for many is an agreed plan between the employer and the employee with specific outputs identified. Therefore unsurprisingly, for many learners the decision to take up the ICDL was a joint decision between them and their employer with slightly more respondents indicating that their employer had made the final decision.

Employer support can also include financial assistance, 94% of respondents indicated that their employer fully funded course fees and 69% of respondents also identified that they were able to study during work time, with 50% of these mentioning that they were able to spend between one and three hours per week studying at work. However, an interesting link to this is that 31% of the respondents were required to deduct this study time from their normal working day. In conjunction with spending time studying at work, 75% also indicated that they studied in their own time, with most spending between 3 -5 hours per week outside of a work environment.

TABLE 1  
Gender and age distribution

	n	%
Gender		
Male	6	32
Female	13	68
Age Group		
21 - 34	2	10
35 - 44	4	21
45 - 54	10	53
55 over	3	16

*Feedback from Students, Employers, and Test Invigilators*

Respondents were asked to indicate their opinion regarding a number of statements with the objective of gaining feedback from them about the ICDL program and their overall experience. Of particular interest, was the 95% of respondents indicated that they agreed that they liked the flexibility of study, for example, being able to study at home or at work rather than being ‘pigeon-holed’ into a formal classroom environment. Closely linked to this was that fact that many (95%) indicated that the commitment to this study was a lot more than they expected and this may be symptomatic of the style of learning or under estimating the amount of content to be covered. Full details of these responses are outlined below in Table 2. Given the above information and the existing comments already feedback to EIT regarding the ICDL, the students appear to be reasonably happy with the program and results tend to skew towards most agreeing with the statements presented to them. Another key success measure of the program is how relevant each of the modules has been to their current job. The learners were asked to rate each of the modules from 1 -7 with 7 indicating that a particular module was most relevant to what was required in their job. Interestingly but not surprising was the fact that the respondents indicated that the email and Internet module was most relevant to what they do. This may be indicative of way business practice has changed or that fact that most used these tools as a function of what they do. Another surprising outcome was that the presentation module was ranked 4 out of 7 ahead of spreadsheets, which was perceived before the study to be of higher importance. Outlined below in Table 3 is a full list of the relevance of each module and the mean score for each.

In order to provide clarity, the above table was ranked by the mean score of all the respondents and then each module was also given a percentage score to show the relevance of each to their current position. Employer responses to the program has also been very positive, with many indicating via verbal feedback that the flexibility of the program and the common goal between the employee and the employer to successfully reach completion being a key factor. As indicated above, employers are keen to assist employees with the financial aspects and this in it self it s a vote of confidence. In one particular case, an IT Manager quoted “now when I go to meetings and talk about ‘techy stuff’, ‘non-techy’ people actually understand some of what I saying, whereas before it was over all of their heads.” “Comments back from one HR Coordinator showed interest has already been generated at their next plant. This has translated into extra numbers being added to a growing list already being formed by the organization for another delivery of ICDL in September.” (R Walford, EIT, 2005)

With the ICDL being both a multimedia based learning tool and mostly self paced, ensuring students remain motivated and focused was always a critical element in ensuring the program was successful. Feedback received from the EIT staff indicates that the ICDL is for anyone who “is motivated and likes independent learning (definitely not for everyone),” and that in some cases “prior knowledge of some of the modules is definitely an advantage.” With all assessment activities taking place at an approved test centre (EIT), EIT staff were often able to meet and motivate students on a regular basis and all EIT staff involved with this program indicated that this was a vital component of the course.

TABLE 2  
Student Feedback

Statement:	Mean	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)
1. I feel that the flexibility to study at home and/or at work is more convenient than attending formal classes	3.53	95	5
2. The learning software is easy to use and organized in a way that allows me to meet the learning outcomes of the qualification.	3.47	84	16
3. The pre-test exercises help me identify those topics in which I am already skilled in order to create a custom path through the course	3.47	89	11
4. I found the opportunity to practice in the 'real' application useful	3.42	84	16
5. I found the level of commitment and time needed to study more than I expected	3.26	95	5
6. I found the testing process non-threatening and less stressful than I imagined	3.05	79	21
7. Overall, this course meets my learning needs	2.95	74	26

TABLE 3  
Relevance of each module

Module	Mean	Low Relevance (%)	Medium Relevance (%)	High Relevance (%)
Internet and Email	6.6	0	8	92
Word Processing	6.3	0	18	82
Using the PC and Managing Files	6.2	0	27	73
Presentation	5.7	0	45	55
Database	5.6	9	27	64
Spreadsheets	5.3	25	0	75
Concepts of IT	5	13	31	56

### Conclusions

Following the discussion section and the analysis a number of conclusions can be drawn with some also identifying further areas to research as mentioned in the following section. Life learning is not a new concept, but something which learners may experience in different ways. Second chance learners often experience the concept of life long learning as many have in the ICDL program. Many life long learners, want to take control of their learning rather than be directed, hence their reason for continual learning. This is predominately backed up in the fact that the decision to study was a joint one, rather than a forced decision. The ICDL/ECDL has been a world wide success story as an internationally recognized computing qualification and some of this success has been seen at EIT. The introduction of the ICDL at EIT has been a success story in terms of the qualification and its effectiveness in providing a great co operative experience for both the institution and learners. Feedback from employees, employers and staff has been positive and in most cases employers were keen to support their employees, however some restraints were made in terms of time allocation at work. It's a team thing, between, the employee, employer and EIT.

### Further Areas of Research

1. The pathway to the Advanced ICDL (all those who said they would like to study more!) although only four modules available so far, however, each module passed is awarded it's own certificate
2. Do the under 30's already possess the skills to function in the 21<sup>st</sup> global marketplace?, and
3. Is there a niche market for the assessment of IT skills in relation to what an employee perceives they have got versus what is required or a particular position?

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### Appendix

#### International Computer Driving Licence Confidential Survey Form

I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary, confidential and that no material which could identify me will be used in any reports on this study. Answering the questions below should only take around 15 minutes.

#### THE QUALIFICATION

**1. Do you use a computer as part of your job role?**

- Yes   
No

**2. Is your ICDL course**

- Self funded (paid by you)   
Paid by your employer

**3. Have you taken computer-based training courses before?**

- Yes  (answer (a) below)  
No  (answer (b) below)

**a. If yes, do you feel comfortable using this method of studying?**

- Yes   
No

**b. How do you feel this form of study fits with your style of learning, is it?**

- Definitely better than the 'traditional' method of studying (e.g.   
classroom, tutor, timetables, lessons)  
Slightly better than traditional study methods   
No better or worse than traditional study methods   
Slightly worse than traditional study methods   
Definitely worse than traditional study methods

**4. Which modules of the ICDL have you studied (please tick as many as apply)**

- Module 1 - Basic concepts of information technology
- Module 2 - Using the computer and managing files
- Module 3 - Word processing
- Module 4 - Spreadsheets
- Module 5 - Database
- Module 6 - Presentation
- Module 7 – Internet and email

**5. Which tests of the ICDL have you passed (please tick as many as apply)**

- Module 1 - Basic concepts of information technology
- Module 2 - Using the computer and managing files
- Module 3 - Word processing
- Module 4 - Spreadsheets
- Module 5 - Database
- Module 6 - Presentation
- Module 7 - Internet and email

**YOUR STUDY**

**6. Does your employer allow you to study your ICDL at work?**

Yes  (answer (a) below)

No  (answer (b) below)

**a. If yes, is the time allowed deducted from your normal working day**

Yes

No

**b. If no, do you study during your own time e.g. lunchbreaks/teabreaks/after office hours?**

Yes

No

**7. On average, how many hours a week at home or at work do you spend studying using your ICDL CD ROM**

	At home	At work
None	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Less than 3 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Between 3 and 5 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More than 5 hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**8. Was the decision to study the ICDL made by you or by your employer?**

You

Employer

**9. For each module completed now, how relevant has it been to your present job role (7 for most relevant through to 1 for least relevant)**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Module 1 - Basic concepts of information technology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Module 2 - Using the computer and managing files	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Module 3 - Word processing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Module 4 - Spreadsheets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Module 5 - Database	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Module 6 - Presentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Module 7 - Internet and email	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**10. Of the modules selected above, list the three most important things (ideas, skills, or practical knowledge) that you learned from your study that you now use on a regular basis in your job**

**11. Do you feel you use a computer in your job more efficiently now than before you began your ICDL**

Yes

No

**12. Do you feel more confident with computers now than before you began your ICDL?**

Yes

No

**13. Would you consider further Information Technology courses in the future?**

Yes

No

**If Yes, what sort of course would you consider?**

**14. Please read the statements below and circle the response that closely matches your opinion**

- a) I feel that the flexibility to study at home and/or at work is more convenient than attending formal classes.

*Strongly Agree*      *Somewhat Agree*      *Somewhat Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

- b) The learning software is easy to use and organised in a way that allows me to meet the learning outcomes of the qualification.

*Strongly Agree*      *Somewhat Agree*      *Somewhat Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

- c) The pre-test exercises help me identify those topics in which I am already skilled in order to create a custom path through the course.

*Strongly Agree*      *Somewhat Agree*      *Somewhat Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

- d) I found the opportunity to practice in the 'real' application useful.

*Strongly Agree*      *Somewhat Agree*      *Somewhat Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

- e) I found the level of commitment and time needed to study more than I expected

*Strongly Agree*      *Somewhat Agree*      *Somewhat Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

- f) I found the testing process non-threatening and less stressful than I imagined.

*Strongly Agree*      *Somewhat Agree*      *Somewhat Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

- g) Overall, this course meets my learning needs

*Strongly Agree*      *Somewhat Agree*      *Somewhat Disagree*      *Strongly Disagree*

**15. Please use the space below to make any additional comments about this course not mentioned in other sections of this survey**

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION ABOUT YOU**

**16. Are you**

Male

Female

**17. Your Age Group is**

Under 21    21 - 34    34 - 44    45 - 54    Over 55

                      

**18. Please give a short description of your current job role**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Endnotes:**

<sup>i</sup> The European Computer Driving Licence Foundation. URL <http://www.ecdl.com/main/history.php> Date accessed 26 March 2006

<sup>ii</sup> The European Computer Driving Licence Foundation. URL <http://www.ecdl.com/main/syllabus.php>. Date Accessed 17th April 2006