European Computer Driving Licence Syllabus Version 3.0

For the **European Computer Driving Licence Advanced Level Modules**, click here.

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1.1 The European Computer Driving Licence

The European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL)[1] certifies that the holder has knowledge of the basic concepts of Information Technology (IT) and is able to use a personal computer[2] and common computer applications at a basic level of competence. In practice the ECDL certificate indicates that the holder has passed one theoretical test that assesses his or her knowledge of the basic concepts of Information Technology (IT), and six practice-based tests which assess the holder's basic competence in using a personal computer and working with common computer applications.

The European Computer Driving Licence is an internationally accepted certificate. It can simplify employment procedures and assure the employer that applicants and staff have the necessary level of knowledge and competence to use common computer applications. The ECDL is a certificate of knowledge and proven competence and is based on a single agreed Syllabus.

The overall objective of the ECDL programme is an improvement in the level of basic knowledge about Information Technology (IT) and a higher level of basic competence in using personal computers and common computer applications throughout Europe and internationally.

The ECDL is deployed and monitored by the European Computer Driving Licence Foundation (ECDL-F). The role of the Foundation is to promote and co-ordinate the development of the ECDL concept. The ECDL-F is the guarantor of the ECDL standard and the Foundation ensures that the ECDL is administered in an equitable manner throughout Europe and internationally. Its role has now developed to cover the International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL).

The European Computer Driving Licence Foundation was formed to co-ordinate the introduction and operation of the ECDL concept throughout Europe. The ECDL concept is owned by the ECDL Foundation. The Foundation is a not for profit organisation that licences a national Licensee to use the ECDL concept and establish an ECDL dissemination programme in that country. Within Europe the national Licensee must be a member of the Council of European Professional Informatics Societies (CEPIS). Outside Europe the ECDL Foundation will licence organisations qualified by the ECDL Foundation as Licensees.

[1] References within this document to European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) include the International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL). ECDL Foundation Syllabus Version 3.0 is published as the official Syllabus for use within the European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) and International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL) certification programmes.

[2] Personal computer as a term within this document is intended to mean any brand of personal desktop or portable computer.

1.2 Objectives of the ECDL

- To promote and encourage computer literacy for all
- To raise the level of knowledge about Information Technology (IT) and the level of competence in using personal computers and common computer applications for all citizens within Europe and internationally
- To ensure all computer users understand best practices and the advantages of using a personal computer

- To increase the productivity of all employees who need to use computers in their work
- To enable better returns from investments in Information Technology (IT)
- To provide a basic qualification which will allow all people, regardless of their background, to be part of the Information Society

1.3 Benefits of the ECDL
Today, computer skills are increasingly important to people in all walks of life. The ECDL is an information technology certificate for all citizens. It is intended for those who need to, or wish to, know how to use a personal computer. It is suitable for people from every work discipline, for people entering the job market, and for all ages. Some of the benefits of the ECDL are that it provides:

- An IT skills qualification for everyone
- An innovative and tangible method of skills measurement and validation
- A model for education and training in the Information Society
- A highly effective training delivery model
- Greater public awareness of the benefits of active participation in the Information
- A flexible and accessible qualification that offers increased mobility to holders

1.4 ECDL Target Population
The target population for the ECDL is the general public who want to use a personal computer competently. The ECDL qualification allows workers, students and citizens to formally show, with their certification, that they have basic knowledge and competence in personal computer use. For example, office workers who want their skills using a personal computer formally recognised, will want to take the ECDL tests and obtain certification. Formal certification of computer competency is also valuable to employers to assess an employee or potential employee's skill. As such the target group for ECDL is a very broad population.

1.5 Level of Difficulty
The ECDL is a certificate of knowledge and competence in personal computer use at a basic level. This basic level of knowledge and competence is expressed in the ECDL Syllabus by giving a detailed list of the Knowledge Areas and Knowledge Items (Module 1) and Skill Sets and Task Items (Modules 2-7) covered by the ECDL Syllabus. The Knowledge Areas and Skill Sets included in the ECDL Syllabus are those recognised by expert practitioners in the various domains as being necessary to cover basic knowledge and competence in using a personal computer and common computer applications.

1.6 The ECDL Standard
The document presented in this publication is the ECDL Syllabus, which is the basis for the ECDL standard. The ECDL standard consists of the following:

- The ECDL Syllabus, which is the detailed description of the Knowledge Areas and Skill Sets covered by the standard
- The European Question and Test Base (EQTB), which comprises the questions and tests used to certify the ECDL standard
- The Guidelines for ECDL Certification

For the computer user the physical ECDL products are the ECDL certificate itself and the European Computer Skills Card (ECSC).

Conformance to the ECDL standard and the deployment programme of the ECDL is monitored and ensured by the European Computer Driving Licence Foundation.

All the above are elements of the ECDL standard. They are described in more detail in the following sections.

1.6.1 Module Domains

Module 1 ***Basic Concepts of Information Technology (IT),*** requires the candidate to know about the basic physical make-up of a personal computer and understand some of the basic concepts of Information Technology (IT) such as data storage and memory, the context for computer-based soft-ware applications in society, and the uses of information networks within computing. The candidate shall also appreciate how IT systems are found in everyday situations; and how personal computers can affect health. The candidate shall be aware of some of the security and legal issues associated with computers.

Module 2 ***Using the Computer and Managing Files***, requires the candidate to demonstrate knowledge and competence in using the basic functions of a personal computer and its operating system. The candidate shall be able to operate effectively within the desktop environment. He or she shall be able to manage and organise files and directories/folders and know how to copy, move and delete files and directories/folders. The candidate shall demonstrate the ability to work with desktop icons and to manipulate windows. The candidate shall demonstrate the ability to use search features, simple editing tools and print management facilities available within the operating system.

Module 3 ***Word Processing***, requires the candidate to demonstrate the ability to use a word processing application on a personal computer. He or she shall understand and be able to accomplish basic operations associated with creating, formatting and finishing a word processing document ready for distribution. The candidate shall demonstrate competence in using some of the more advanced features associated with word processing applications such as creating standard tables, using pictures and images within a document, importing objects and using mail merge tools.

Module 4 ***Spreadsheets***, requires the candidate to understand the basic concepts of spreadsheets and to demonstrate the ability to use a spreadsheet application on a personal computer. He or she shall understand and be able to accomplish basic operations associated with developing, formatting and using a spreadsheet. The candidate shall be able to accomplish standard mathematical and logical operations using basic formulas and functions. The candidate shall demonstrate competence in using some of the more advanced features of a spreadsheet application such as importing objects, and creating graphs and charts.

Module 5 ***Database***, requires the candidate to understand the basic concepts of databases and demonstrate the ability to use a database on a personal computer. The module is divided in two sections; the first section tests the candidate's ability to design and plan a simple database using a standard database package; the second section requires the candidate to demonstrate that he or she can retrieve information from an existing database by using the query, select and sort tools available in the data-base. The candidate shall also be able to create and modify reports.

Module 6 ***Presentation***, requires the candidate to demonstrate competence in using presentation tools on a personal computer. The candidate shall be able to accomplish basic tasks such as creating, formatting and preparing presentations for distribution and display. The candidate shall demonstrate the ability to create a variety of presentations for different target audiences or situations. The candidate shall demonstrate the ability to accomplish basic operations with graphics and charts and to use various slide show effects.

Module 7 ***Information and Communication***, is divided in two sections. The first section, Information, requires the candidate to accomplish basic Web search tasks using a Web browser application and available search engine tools, to bookmark search results and to print Web pages and search reports. The second section, Communication, requires the candidate to demonstrate their ability to use electronic mail software to send and receive messages, to attach documents or files to a message and to organize and manage message folders or directories within electronic mail software.

1.6.2 The ECDL Syllabus
The purpose of the ECDL Syllabus is to list the Knowledge Areas and Knowledge Items and the Skill Sets and Task Items covered by the ECDL standard and to express in general terms the level of knowledge and skill required to achieve the ECDL standard.

The ECDL standard is based on the computer user knowing certain basic facts about Information Technology (IT) and having the basic knowledge and skills to use a personal computer and its software applications to carry out everyday tasks. The Knowledge Areas and the Skill Sets necessary to be mastered in the ECDL standard are described in the ECDL Syllabus. The purpose of the ECDL Syllabus is to list the facts to be known and the skills to be mastered that are covered by the ECDL standard.

1.6.3 The European Question and Test Base (EQTB)
The European Question and Test Base (EQTB) comprises the questions and tests used within ECDL certification. The EQTB is the property of the ECDL Foundation and is not in the public domain. The ECDL tests are software vendor independent. The ECDL may be certified by manual evaluation testing or by automatic evaluation testing.

The standard for Manual Test Evaluation comes from the manual European Question and Test Base (EQTB). The standard for Automatic Test Evaluation comes from the automatic European Question and Test Base (EQTB). The manual and automatic evaluation EQTB's are both based on the single agreed ECDL Syllabus. Any change to the ECDL Syllabus is reflected in new versions of the Manual and Automatic Evaluation EQTB's.

1.6.4 The ECDL Tests
The ECDL may be certified by a set of tests undertaken at the computer with manual evaluation or alternatively by undertaking a set of tests at the computer with automatic evaluation. The ECDL certification procedure is moving towards automatic evaluation testing.

Manual Evaluation Testing is task oriented and a high pass mark of 70-80 % is expected in general, reflecting the need to be competent in the practical skills being tested. Automatic Evaluation Testing, which has been introduced in several European countries, is often knowledge-based or based on task simulations. Again a high pass mark of 70-80% is expected, reflecting the need for the candidate to illustrate sound knowledge and competence in the practical skills being tested.

Please refer to the ECDL marking guidelines for EQTB Version 3.0 for further information with respect to the marking schemes employed in the manual and automatic evaluation EQTB's for Syllabus Version 3.0.

1.6.5 Deployment of the ECDL
The ECDL is deployed and monitored by the European Computer Driving Licence Foundation (ECDL-F). In order to maintain the ECDL standard, all countries must have an organisation authorized by the ECDL Foundation to monitor that all the tests are based on the ECDL Syllabus. The education and examination procedures can differ between countries, however the ECDL Foundation requires that a valid and well-defined examination process together with a reliably operated testing process be in place at all approved Test Centres. The process of awarding an ECDL is audited by the ECDL Foundation to maintain the standard.

The ECDL is based on the standard ECDL Syllabus written in English. The Syllabus defines the areas of knowledge and practical competencies required in the ECDL. The standard test is localized for use in different countries, while using the same Syllabus and therefore documenting the same level of knowledge and competence in computing. The process of authorizing a localized EQTB is audited and recorded by the ECDL Foundation.

The ECDL dissemination programme differs from most national or international education programmes, since it is based on a standard test or examination instead of a standardized teaching approach. The ECDL always certifies the same standard of knowledge and competence, irrespective of a person's nationality, education, age or sex. An ECDL that is certified in one country is valid in another.

1.6.6 The ECDL Product
The ECDL Product, for the user, consists of two physical items: the European Computer Driving Licence itself and the European Computer Skills Card (ECSC) which is an official record of the tests passed so far. ECDL Start is a certificate which may be awarded after any four modules have been passed within an ECDL test programme.

The European Computer Driving Licence (ECDL) is the certificate that attests to the holder's ability to use a personal computer and common computer applications, and states that he or she has been tested according to the ECDL standard and the authorized ECDL Syllabus. The ECDL is an internationally accepted document and has a similar format throughout Europe.

For the candidate, gaining a complete ECDL builds around the European Computer Skills Card (ECSC). The candidate will obtain a Skills Card before taking the first test. A Skills Card is an official form that is used to record each test successfully completed. As he or she passes each test, the Skills Card will be updated. When all seven tests have been passed, the candidate will be eligible for a European Computer Driving Licence. The candidate or the Test Centre sends the completed ECSC to the country's national ECDL office where it will be exchanged for a European Computer Driving Licence.

The modules can be taken in any sequence and the tests can be taken in different Test Centres and indeed in different countries. An ECDL or an ECSC that is granted in one country is valid in another. Both the ECDL and the ECSC are internationally recognised certificates.

1.7 ECDL Syllabus Version 3.0 Implementation

ECDL European Question and Test Base (EQTB) Version 3.0 for Manual Test Evaluation (MTE) is available for use from the end of November 1999. New ECDL candidates are encouraged to start with Version 3.0 from January 2000. ECDL European Question and Test Base (EQTB) Version 1.5 for Manual Test Evaluation (MTE) will exist in parallel with Version 3.0 until 1st October 2000.

1.8 Evolution in Syllabus Version 3.0
The knowledge and practical skills covered by the ECDL Syllabus Version 3.0 are no broader and the level of difficulty no greater then Version 1.5 of the Syllabus. There has been some evolution in the Syllabus to follow market trends. What has changed is the style and the presentation format - more detail has been presented and there is more precision. Syllabus Version 3.0 makes more explicit what was implicit in Syllabus Version 1.0 and Syllabus Version 1.5.

1.9 The ECDL Modules
The following is a description of the ECDL Syllabus modules. Each module is presented as a description of the goals of that module followed by a detailed description of the Knowledge Areas and Skill Sets covered.

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European Computer Driving Licence *ADVANCED* - Level Modules

The Advanced Level Modules are provided in PDF Format, you will need Adobe Acrobat Reader to display the files. Acrobat Reader is Free. Please click the Acrobat Reader icon to download.

Please click here for Module AM3, Word Processing, Advanced – Level

Please click here for Module AM4, Spreadsheets, Advanced – Level

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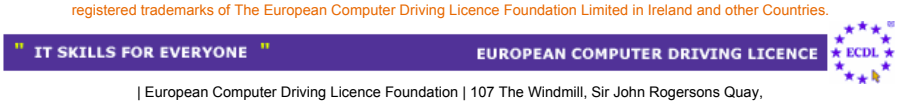

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