

The British Council is Britain's principle agency for the promotion of education and training on behalf of the United Kingdom overseas.

The British Council is represented in 100 countries and its global mission is to enhance the reputation of the United Kingdom in the world as a valued partner. It works closely with the British Embassy or High Commission in the support and promulgation of British foreign policy, and in more than half of the countries in which it is represented it constitutes a formal part of the British Diplomatic Mission.

The British Council was formally established in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 1968 with its Headquarters in Riyadh. Satellite Offices were subsequently established in Jeddah and in Dammam. In 1974 the British and Saudi Governments signed a formal Bilateral Cultural Agreement under which the Council continues to operate in the Kingdom. The staffing complement of the Council in Saudi Arabia is some 100 persons. The forecast turnover for 1999/2000 is £5.5 million of which 83% is generated in country in the form of contracted and other paid services.

The British Council pursues a wide range of activities in support of UK-driven human resource development in the Kingdom. Priority services include:

1. **Promoting the use of UK goods and services in education and training. The Council provides:**
 - Information about UK systems, services and providers to individuals, institutions and organisations in Saudi Arabia.
 - Information and expert advice for Saudis who wish to study in Britain.
 - Comprehensive services for the placement in the UK of Saudis who wish to study in Britain.
 - Information about export opportunities in Saudi Arabia to UK providers. It works closely in this regard with British Trade International through the BTI Education and Training Export Group (ETEG).
 - Contracted services in Saudi Arabia in all aspects of human resource development for the development of which it uses UK providers on a sub-contracted basis.
2. **Acting as a broad-based and informed source of accurate and unbiased information about the United Kingdom.**
 - Using a mixture of electronic communications, CD-ROM and hard copy, the Council is an informed source of information about all aspects of the UK including education and training, commercial and business, and general.



*Dr David Burton, OBE
Director
The British Council
Saudi Arabia*



**The
British
Council**

3. **Promoting the use of English language for international communication and trade.**
 - The Council provides a variety of programmes of English language and communication skills through its Language Institutes in Riyadh, Jeddah and Dammam. Separate programmes, delivered by female staff, are also offered in these locations at selected Women's Centres.
 - The Council provides a range of customised language and communication skills programmes for corporate clients, usually delivered off-site.
 - The Council actively promotes and supports the delivery of a range of UK school and other examinations in institutions and organisations in the Kingdom.
4. **Promoting the UK as an energetic, customer-oriented, creative and innovative high-tech society.**
 - The Council plays a pivotal role in current HMG policy to correct perceptions in the Middle East of the UK as a rather traditional and unexciting society.
5. **Consolidating the network of policy makers and opinion formers sympathetic towards the UK.**
 - Many Saudis have spent part of their education and/or training in the UK. It is the Council's role to provide a focus for such people, many of whom occupy key positions in business and in Government.
6. **Encouraging the adoption in Saudi Arabia of current UK best practice in all aspects of education and training. Currently the focus of attention is:**
 - the creation of systems of competency-based training for young Saudis.
 - raising awareness in Saudi Arabia of the rigour and success of the various quality assurance mechanisms as applied to qualifications awarded by the (British) Further and Higher Education sectors.
7. **To encourage youth exchange and dialogue between the UK and Saudi Arabia.**