

Prince Andrew meets Saudi students at British Council Teaching Centre



Prince Andrew Duke of York visited the Men's Teaching Centre at British Council Riyadh in May and joined an English language lesson with Saudi students. It was a rare privilege for the students to have a royal visitor in their class talking to them about the English Premiership but Prince Andrew had an excellent time too. "It is good to see the Council doing what it does best," he said.

The Prince, who was on a visit to Saudi Arabia on May 9 and 10, attended the English class where the topic was football. The conversation focused on the approaching World Cup, the 2012 Olympics in London, and the international competition for English Language learners sponsored by the British Council in cooperation with the Premier League in the UK.

The Prince chatted with the students and asked them how their English language courses benefited them.

Ibrahim Al-Jasser, one of the students, said, "The British Council is among the leading institutes in the Kingdom and has the best teachers and educational material. It has an exceptional focus on conversational skills." On how the English course has helped him, he said, "I never used to communicate through email at work before; but now I can do so with confidence. Some of my colleagues even ask me for my help. Furthermore, customers who don't speak Arabic are now sent to me. And it was a great experience to meet Prince Andrew and discuss football with His Highness."

Prince Andrew also met two blind students, Abdullah and Nawaf, who attend regular classes at the centre using Braille.

There is no doubt that teaching English is what the Council is best known for. Most of our offices around the world have teaching centres where we teach English to members of the public and private corporations. We also work with governments and ministries of education training English teachers. Richard Rooze, Teaching Centre Manager, told the Prince about the Council's expansion project for the coming year and its plan to increase the number of students, both male and female, from 10,200 to 15,000.

Tony Caldebank
Chairman Education & Training SIG

Security SIG



Jim Mann
SIG Chairman Security

As your Security SIG Chairman I come with a fairly diverse background (or was that a chequered past) which includes previous service in various and several Military and Police Forces across the globe.

As some of you know, my Police 'adventures' began with eight years service as a 'Contract Officer' in the British South Africa Police, Rhodesia during the 1970's. Here I spent some initial time in uniform (not a pretty sight) and later time with the CID and Special Branch. From what I can remember it was very definitely the best eight years of my entire life!

Back in those days I experienced a 'Close Encounter' involving a UFO. This was shared with, and witnessed by, most of the other police officers on duty that evening. They may be 'out there'..! I will write this story another time but mention the incident now as a link to the 'Ode' enclosed which I wrote after a trip to Nevada / Vegas / Death Valley last year with my daughter. This trip had UFO links as well and took me back to a night long ago.

